REPORT RESUMES

ED 016 104 VT 004 110

SUCCESSFUL FOSTER HOMES, AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THEIR CHARACTERISTICS.

BY- CAUTLEY, PATRICIA W. AND OTHERS

WISCONSIN STATE DEPT. OF PUBLIC WELFARE, MADISON

PUB DATE JUN 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$1.00 HC-$9.72 241P.

DESCRIPTORS- *EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED CHILDREN, *FOSTER FAMILY, *PLACEMENT, *CASEWORKER APPROACH, BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS, INTERVIEWS, PREDICTION, *FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS, INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS, PARENT ATTITUDES,

THE GOALS OF THE STUDY WERE TO IDENTIFY SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS WHICH DIFFERENTIATE FOSTER FAMILIES WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL IN CARING FOR DISTURBED CHILDREN FROM THOSE WHO ARE UNSUCCESSFUL AND TO DEVELOP PROCEDURES FOR USING THESE CHARACTERISTICS AS A PART OF THE INTAKE STUDY OF FOSTER PARENT APPLICANTS. CASEWORKERS SUPERVISING THE PLACEMENT OF 127 CHILDREN RATED THE FOSTER FAMILY SUCCESS ON THE BASIS OF HOW WELL THE PARENTS WERE MEETING THE GOALS OF THE PLACEMENTS. APPLICATION OF THE MULTIPLE CORRELATION AND MULTIPLE REGRESSION TECHNIQUE TO ITEMS AND FACTORS IDENTIFIED FROM ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM FOSTER PARENTS SHOWED THAT EIGHT VARIABLES HAD STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS WITH FAMILY SUCCESS--AN AVERAGE INCOME LEVEL, COOPERATIVE DECISION MAKING BY THE FOSTER PARENTS, THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN THE FAMILY HAS HAD, (THE MORE CHILDREN, THE MORE SUCCESSFUL), RECIPROCAL ENCOURAGEMENT BETWEEN THE PARENTS IN REGARD TO THE FOSTER PARENT ROLE, THE FOSTER FATHER'S OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL, (THE HIGHER THE LEVEL, THE MORE SUCCESSFUL), THE FOSTER MOTHER'S RATING AS A "GOOD RISK" IN HANDLING A HYPOTHETICAL "DEFIANT" CHILD, INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE FOSTER FATHER THAT HIS PARENTS WERE AFFECTIONATE, AND INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE FOSTER MOTHER THAT HER PARENTS WERE RELIGIOUS, WHICH CORRELATED NEGATIVELY WITH THE SUCCESS RATING. THE FURTHER STUDY AND REFINEMENT OF SOME OF THESE ITEMS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNIQUES TO IDENTIFY PARENT SUCCESS THROUGH RELIABLE EVIDENCE OF CHILD IMPROVEMENT WERE RECOMMENDED. THE APPENDIXES INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF CHILD SELECTION PROCEDURES, DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS, AND FINDINGS. (JK)

ED016104

R-47

Successful Foster Homes

An Exploratory Study of Their Characteristics

Foster Homes
Research Project

1966

Wisconsin
Department
of Public Welfare

VT004110

1000-83

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

SUCCESSFUL FOSTER HOMES

An Exploratory Study of Their Characteristics

Report prepared by:

Patricia W. Cautley, Ph.D., Project Director
Martha Jean Aldridge, M.A., Research Assistant
Bernard Finifter, M.A., Research Assistant

This investigation was supported in part by a research grant from the Children's Bureau, Welfare Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D. C. 20201.

FOSTER HOMES RESEARCH PROJECT

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE, Madison,

June, 1966

Acknowledgements

A project such as this depends upon the cooperation and help of many people. We are greatly indebted to the Advisory Committee and particularly to its chairman, Robert E. O'Connor, M.D., Superintendent of the Wisconsin Diagnostic Center, for his early expression of the need for such a study and his continuing support of it. The members of the Committee, Perry Baker, William P. Lentz, Ph.D., and Milton M. Varsos, all from the Division for Children and Youth, Paul H. Kusuda from the Bureau of Research, and Henry H. Weiss, Ph.D., from the Wisconsin Diagnostic Center, have also provided guidance and counsel throughout the entire project. We feel particularly indebted to Perry Baker, who worked with us at every stage and provided not only necessary information but contributed significantly to our thinking.

The cooperation and help of the Division for Children and Youth made it possible for us to study foster homes under their supervision through Mr. Frank Newgent, Director of the Division and Mr. Hilmer A. Olsen, Chief of Direct Services. We acknowledge gratefully the cooperation of the District supervisory and casework staff, whose help from the early stages of the selection of the sample of children through the later stages of lengthy interviews made the study possible. And to the foster parents and children themselves, even though they must remain unidentified, we wish to express our appreciation for the time and effort they contributed so generously and willingly.

The Survey Research Laboratory of the University of Wisconsin provided the field staff which conducted the interviews during the first two phases of data collection. The University of Wisconsin Computing Center has made it possible for us to use its equipment for the analysis of our data, and both Richard G. Wolfe and Eric A. Smith have contributed to the project through their work as programmers.

The Business Office of The Wisconsin Diagnostic Center, through its head, John E. Welch, has been responsible for the fiscal management of the project.

Several research assistants who are no longer on the staff of the project have contributed particularly to specific parts. Harold E. Warstler, now with the Office of Economic Opportunity, wrote his master's thesis on the development of the Attitude Questionnaire for foster parents. Audrey C. Smith and James A. Skeel carried administrative responsibilities at crucial stages of the research. A variety of clerical and technical work has been performed diligently by Julia Maistrellis and Jenny L. Schroeder.

We are also indebted to Dr. Edgar F. Borgatta and Dr. David Fanshel for permission to use the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule and to Dr. Borgatta for assistance in interpreting these data.

Dr. Stephen M. Pittel has carried the major responsibility for developing the semi-projective interview technique used to study the foster children themselves.

Finally, we wish to express our gratitude to the Children's Bureau for its support of this work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.. i

LIST OF TABLES.. v

Chapter I. OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY.................. 1

Chapter II. THE RESEARCH PLAN...................................... 5

- The Population Studied.. 5
- Attrition of Cases at Successive Stages in the Study 9
- Methods and Schedule of Data Collection............ 11

Chapter III. EVIDENCE OF THE STABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF CHILDREN BASED ON THE CHILD BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS SCHEDULE.............................. 15

- The Stability of Ratings.. 15
- Corroborative Evidence of Behavior Classification of Children...................................... 18
  - From the Interviews.. 18
  - From Weekly Behavior Report Forms............... 22
  - From the Teacher Questionnaire.................. 24
- Evidence of Degree of Disturbance from Interview Data and from Total Scores on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule........................ 24

Chapter IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOSTER CHILDREN STUDIED........ 31

- Changes in the Characteristics of This Group of Foster Children at Successive Stages in the Study 31
- The Foster Child's Relationship with his Natural Family.. 34
  - The Legal Status of the Foster Child........... 34
  - Conflict of the Foster Child...................... 35
  - The Attitude of the Foster Parents toward the Natural Family.................................. 39
  - "Long-term Plans" for the Child............... 42
- Relationship of Various Characteristics of the Child to His "Degree of Disturbance".................. 43
- The Teachers' Perceptions of the Foster Children.... 46

Chapter V. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOSTER FAMILIES................ 49

Chapter VI. THE DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT OF THE "SUCCESS" OF A FOSTER HOME... 57

- Statement of the Problem.. 57
- The Approach Taken in This Research.............. 58
  - The Reliability and Stability of the "Success" Rating.. 59
  - The Meaning and Validity of the Global "Success" Ratings.. 64
  - An Attempt to Develop Operational Measures of "Success".. 67
  - Relationship of the Child's "Degree of Disturbance" to the Ratings of "Success"..................... 69
  - The Contribution of These Various Ratings to the Global "Success" Rating........................ 71
  - Next Steps in the Definition and Measurement of "Success".. 78

Page

Chapter VII. AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CASEWORK PROCESS TO "SUCCESS"...................... 81

Concluding Comments.............................. 86

Chapter VIII. THE SEARCH FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF "SUCCESSFUL" FOSTER FAMILIES.................................... 87

Demographic Characteristics and Socio-Economic Status.. 87
Characteristics of the Foster Parents' Own Natal Families............................. 90
Own Parents................................ 90
Characteristics of the Present Foster Family..... 92
Foster Parents' Relationship with the Larger Family and Their Friends........................ 94
Responses of Foster Mothers to Hypothetical Behavior Problems............................. 96
The Foster Parent Attitude Questionnaire......... 98
Factor Analysis of Potential Predictors to "Success"...................................... 101
Summary.. 104

Chapter IX. TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE "SUCCESS" OF A FOSTER HOME BE PREDICTED ON THE BASIS OF OUR PRESENT FINDINGS?. 105

Conclusions...................................... 116

Chapter X. FINDINGS FROM SEMI-PROJECTIVE INTERVIEWS WITH FOSTER MOTHERS AND FOSTER CHILDREN................ 119

Description of Methodology....................... 119
Analysis of the Data............................. 121
Content Analysis............................ 121
Development of Rating Scales................ 123
Use of Child's Responses as a Measure of Success.................................. 125
Use of the Mothers' Responses as a Measure of Success............................... 127
Use of the Mothers' Responses to Predict Success at Time of Intake................ 129
Summary and Recommendations for Future Use of This Technique................................ 129

Chapter XI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS........................ 131

APPENDICES.. A1

LIST OF TABLES

Page

Table 1 Behavior Classification of Foster Children Selected for Study.......... 8

Table 2 Changes in the Sample of Children Studied in Successive Phases of Study.......... 10

Table 3 Correlation Between Scores on Factors in Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule Obtained from Social Worker and Foster Mother Ratings Made at Two Different Times 17

Table 4 Agreement Between Behavior Classification of Children Based on Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule and Problem Descriptions in Interviews.......... 19

Table 5 Descriptions in Interviews of Major Problems of Children in Each of the Original Behavior Categories. 21

Table 6 Descriptions of "Most Difficult" and "Most Pleasing" Behavior of Children in Each of the Original Behavior Categories.......... 23

Table 7 Distribution of Total Scores on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule for Each of the Original Behavior Categories.......... 25

Table 8 Correlations of Various Measures of "Degree of Disturbance".......... 26

Table 9 Correlation Coefficients Between Each Cluster Sum and the Total Score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule.......... 28

Table 10 Changes in the Characteristics of the Foster Children in the Study Due to Attrition.......... 32

Table 11 Correlations Between the Foster Child's "Degree of Disturbance" and Various Aspects of His Placement History.......... 38

Table 12 Relationship Between Age at Which Child Left His Natural Family and Reasons Given by the Social Worker for the Separation.......... 39

Table 13 Characteristics of the Foster Parents and Foster Family 50

Table 14 Correlations Between Global Ratings of Success Given in Round I and Round II Interviews by Same and Different Social Workers.......... 61

Table 15 Relationship Between Social Workers' Ratings of Success and Their More Specific Evaluations of Foster Parents 66

Table 16 The Relationship Between the Child's Degree of Disturbance and the Social Workers' Evaluation of the Foster Parents' Success.......... 70

Table 17 Correlations Between Various Evaluations of the Foster Parents and the Family Success Rating, Round II...... 72

Table 18 Results Obtained When Various Components of the Family Success Rating Are Combined in a Multiple Regression. 74

Page

Table 19 Results Obtained When Various Components of the Family Success Rating Are Combined in a Multiple Regression Omitting the Foster Parents' Problem Handling Skill.. 77

Table 20 Relationships Among Various Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics and the Social Worker's Evaluation of the Foster Parents' Success........... 88

Table 21 Areas Examined for Possible Predictors to "Success" and Most Useful Single Items............................ 102

Table 22 Correlation Coefficients between Scores on Factors of Predictive Items and Global "Success" Ratings........ 103

Table 23 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for All Families.......................... 108

Table 24 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for All Families Utilizing Factors as well as Single Items............................... 109

Table 25 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for Non-Farm Families..................... 114

Table 26 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for Farm Families......................... 115

Table 27 Correlations between Various Measures of "Success" and the Ratings Made from the Foster Children's Responses to the Round III Stories........................... 126

Table 28 Correlation Coefficients among Foster Mothers' and Foster Children's Responses to Stories in Round III.. 127

Table 29 Correlations between Various Measures of "Success" and the Ratings Made from the Foster Mother's Responses to the Round III Stories........................... 128

Figure

Figure 1 Agreement Between Round I and Round II "Success" Ratings of Foster Mothers................................. 62

Chapter I

OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The Wisconsin Department of Public Welfare, through its Division for Children and Youth, provides foster home care for approximately 1500 children per year. In general, its services are provided only for children who are expected to require long term care. Many of the children are referred to the Division by county departments of public welfare, and the majority are under the guardianship of the State, which means that the State has assumed the legal role of parent for these children. A smaller proportion (approximately one-third) are in the legal custody of the State and may subsequently return to their parents. Some of these children in foster homes are emotionally disturbed, and although there has been a considerable increase over the past five years in the facilities available in the State for specialized care and treatment of such children, there is a continuing need for an understanding of "the complexities of the placement of the disturbed child."[1] For example, even at the present time, when recommendations based on intensive clinical study of a child at the Wisconsin Diagnostic Center are made, and are regarded as "one of the most significant decisions that will ever be made for a child,"[2] their implementation is not always possible or successful because of the lack of "treatment" homes and services in the community or because of the difficulty in predicting whether a particular foster home might be able to carry out recommendations for a particular child.

The present study has broader relevance to the entire field of foster care, as one of the problems continually faced by child placement agencies is that of selecting foster parents to meet the needs of the children served. Although there is a considerable body of theory in the social work literature regarding the goals of foster care and the criteria to be used in selecting foster parents from among applicants, there are many practical problems faced by agencies which compete with or contradict the application of these principles.[3] Furthermore, the actual steps in the decision-making process have not been thoroughly identified so that factors associated with "successful" or "unsuccessful" placements may be measured and understood.

---

[1] From a talk given by Dr. Robert E. O'Connor for the 1959 National Conference of Catholic Charities.

[2] Henry H. Weiss, Wisconsin Diagnostic Center: Data Processing Project. Madison, Wisconsin: State Department of Public Welfare. P. 39.

Each replacement of a child, regardless of whether actually resulting from a failure of the placement or from external circumstances beyond the control of the child or foster family or the agency, is costly and wasteful. According to Maas and Engler, generalizing from a study of children living in foster homes in nine widely separated and variously-sized counties in the United States, a large majority of the children in placement face repeated moves, with the accompanying disruption of development and trauma.[4] When the added handicaps of emotional disturbance are included, the chances of a fairly permanent placement of an emotionally disturbed child are greatly reduced. It was out of this concern from improving the placement of emotionally disturbed children that the impetus for the present study came.

The ultimate goal of the present research has been to identify and measure as far as possible those characteristics which will make it possible for an agency to differentiate foster homes with a high probability of "success" from those with a low probability of "success" in caring for the disturbed child between six and twelve years of age. In view of the practical problems faced by agencies in their selection of foster homes, the research focuses especially on those differentiating characteristics which can be obtained and evaluated early in the home study process. Some characteristics which may set foster homes apart from each other in the quality of their performance are excluded from the present study for a variety of reasons. For example, some are too subtle to be reliably measured; other require the use of measurement techniques which are too complex, cumbersome, or time-consuming, to be of practical value at the time of intake.

---

[3] J. Charnley, The art of child placement. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.
Esther Glickman, Child placement through clinically oriented casework. New York; Columbia University Press, 1957.
I. Josselyn, Evaluating motives of foster parents. Child Welfare. 1952, February, 3-8.

[4] Henry S. Maas and R. E. Engler, Jr., Children in need of parents. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.

This present research study must be regarded as primarily an exploratory study with considerable effort directed primarily toward finding possible solutions for a set of intermediary problems whose solution is required before substantial progress can be anticipated toward the larger goal. Some of these intermediary problems have to do with general technical problems involved in research in this new field, others with the effect of the research study. A number of them touch at the very heart of conceptualization in the field, and although much of our energy has been directed toward exploring the possibility of developing ways of "measuring" certain crucial dimensions in this field, we have by no means solved these problems. In a number of instances, we have compared alternative ways of attempting to "measure" the same dimension and the findings must be regarded as tentative until further work is done.

One of the most basic problems in this search for distinguishing features of "successful" and "unsuccessful" foster parents is indicated by the absence of a fully satisfactory criterion measure: "What does success really mean?" "How can success be reliably and validly measured?" The primitive language used to name this concept ("success") indicates that we are still at a very elementary stage in conceptualization in this research area. Even if "success" is replaced by a term such as "role performance of foster parents", this does not add to our understanding until the role is carefully defined. It became clear to us at an early stage in the research that the quality of our answers to this and similar questions would determine not only the meaningfulness and fruitfulness of our search for distinguishing characteristics of foster parents but would also determine whether this study would represent a methodological step forward, or merely another attempt at gathering data without a conceptual framework. At this point we feel we have made progress methodologically, but not as much as we feel is desirable and necessary. We are convinced, however, that progress in this field is intimately tied in with these more basic and technical problems, and that the attainment of the eminently practical goal originally stated for this research depends upon the identification and solution of these crucial antecedent problems. To the extent that they are only partially solved, the findings must be considered exploratory in nature rather than final, and are presented in this spirit.

Chapter II

THE RESEARCH PLAN

The Population Studied

Since this study focuses on "emotionally disturbed" children, it was first necessary to define the population from which the sample was to be drawn, and then to specify the procedure to be followed in selecting the sample of children and their foster homes. Although there seemed to be general agreement among staff members in both the Division of Mental Hygiene and the Division for Children and Youth of the State Department of Public Welfare that many children in foster care were "disturbed," there were no figures available to indicate the number of such children in the State except for a very rough estimate based on an earlier study of foster care needs, suggesting that approximately one-fourth of the children in foster care were "disturbed."[5]

The first task, then, was to find a reasonably objective method for identifying these "disturbed" children, one which could be communicated readily to other professional people and which would also permit later replication of the study if desired. Admittedly, such description of observable behavior means focusing on symptomatic behavior rather than on underlying motivations. In the absence of a generally accepted conceptual scheme for describing emotional disturbance, however, there are a number of advantages to using ratings of observable behavior, both from the point of view of increasing the reliability of reports, as well as for obtaining a detailed basis for comparison between children and between observations of the same child at different points in time. Furthermore, a detailed description would have the added advantage of providing an operational definition of the "disturbed" child. The Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule, developed by Borgatta and Fanshel, was the instrument selected for use.[6] It consists of seventy items describing essentially observable behaviors which are rated in terms of frequency of occurrence.

---

[5] In a survey of Foster Care Needs, conducted by the Division for Children and Youth in April, 1962, information was collected regarding the overall adjustment level of the child, evidences of disturbed behavior, and need for specialized services and facilities such as residential treatment. From these data it appeared that approximately 25 percent of the children in foster care were regarded as "making an extremely poor adjustment," and that another 25 percent were making a "below average adjustment." See William P. Lentz, Survey of Foster Care Needs, Appendix A, Division for Children and Youth Budget Request, 1963-65.

The total population from which the sample of children for the present study was drawn consisted of all white children between the ages of six and thirteen living in foster homes under the primary care of the Division for Children and Youth, State Department of Public Welfare.[7] This population totaled 403 as of December 1, 1963, but is a constantly changing total.

In the initial screening, the District Offices were asked to identify all children in this group of 403 who were known to be (a) mentally retarded (defined as functioning at an I.Q. level below 70), (b) severely physically handicapped (defined in terms of multiple handicaps), (c) organically brain damaged (established through a neurological examination), or (d) in short-term custody of the State (defined as expected custody of less than two years). After these children were eliminated by the Districts, a group of 289, or about three-quarters of the original group, remained for further study.

Copies of the Borgatta-Fanshel Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule were mailed out to the social workers supervising the placements of the 289 children. Out of this number, 258, or about 90 percent, were returned. Reasons for non-return were primarily that the children were not sufficiently well-known to be rated by anyone currently on the agency staff (eighteen) and that some additional children were found to be ineligible for the study (thirteen).

One of the initial goals of the study was to examine the possibility that foster parents who were "successful" in caring for children with certain kinds of behavior problems might have different characteristics than those who were caring for children with other kinds of problems. Therefore it was important not only to select those children who could be considered "most disturbed," but also to select groups of children with clear cut patterns, or syndromes, of "disturbed" behavior. In order to do this, a "second order" factor analysis was carried out on scores based on the twelve separate factors identified from the initial factor analysis of the scores on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule.[8] By this means, three clusters or groups of factors were identified:

---

[6] A copy of this schedule is included at the end of Appendix A.

[7] The decision to limit the sample of children to one racial group was made because the other two racial groups represented in any number in Wisconsin (Negro and Indian) are found in sizeable numbers only in particular parts of the State, and could not possibly be represented in any sample of children in sufficient number to permit adequate study of them as a group. Also, the problems involved in foster care of these two minority racial groups are so special and unique to each that inclusion in a general sample without recognition of their special problems would be a disservice to them and would be a misrepresentation of the data. Hence it seemed preferable to limit the present study to one racial group.

Cluster A.	Factor I (defiance) showed a high positive correlation with Factor II (unsocialized or psychopathic behavior). This could be described as "Defiant, unsocialized behavior," (called "Defiant" in short).
Cluster B.	Factor III (tension and anxiety) was highly correlated positively with Factor IV (lack of affection or unresponsiveness) and also with Factor V (infantile or dependent behavior). This cluster could be described as "Unresponsive, tense, anxious, and infantile behavior," (called "Tense-anxious" in short).
Cluster C.	Factors IX (lack of ability to learn) and X (lack of motivation to learn) were highly correlated positively with each other, and each was correlated negatively with Factor XII (responsibility). This cluster might be described as "Lack of ability, motivation to learn, and responsibility," (called "Slow" in short).

Children with scores one standard deviation or more above the mean in each of these three clusters were selected as the "most disturbed" children. Others were selected if they had a distinct pattern of scores, particularly a high score on either Cluster A or B, and a relatively low score on the other cluster. However, in order to obtain a sample of sufficient size, children with no distinct pattern -- that is, no distinct difference between scores on the several clusters -- were also included in the sample provided they had a high score on one or more of the clusters. In addition, a small number of children with no high scores on any of the clusters were included in the sample on the basis of prior history of emotional disturbance, either a record of having been studied at the Wisconsin Diagnostic Center or of having been diagnosed in a psychological evaluation as showing some signs of emotional disturbance. A total of 127 children or 32 percent of the total population was selected for study (see Table 1).

---

[8] See Appendix A for a detailed description of the selection of the sample.

Table 1

Behavior Classification of Foster Children Selected for Study

	Number of Children
Most Disturbed: "High" or "very high" on all 3 clusters (Defiant, Tense-Anxious and Slow)	27
Defiant: Substantially higher scores on Cluster A (Defiance) than on Cluster B (Tension-Anxiety), regardless of score on Cluster C (Slow)	23
Tense-Anxious: Substantially higher scores on Cluster B (Tension-Anxiety) than on Cluster A (Defiance), regardless of score on Cluster C (Slow)	21
Disturbed-No Definite Pattern: "High" score on one or more clusters, but insufficient difference between scores to warrant classification in any single group	30
Slow: Substantially higher scores on Cluster C (Slow) than on either Clusters A or B	13
Least Disturbed - Evidence From History Only:	13
Total Number of Children in Sample	127

The classification of children shown in Table 1 may be modified to represent a "scale" indicating different degrees of "disturbance" by combining the Defiant, Tense-anxious, and Disturbed-no definite pattern in one category. Further discussion of this is to be found in Chapter III.

It is important to keep in mind that the children selected by this method cannot all be considered "emotionally disturbed" if this term is meant to imply that they are in great need of psychiatric treatment or intensive residential care. A comparison of this population with those groups of children studied earlier by Borgatta and Fanshel indicates that this group of children is rated as somewhat less disturbed than either the institutionalized population which was studied first or the referrals to outpatient psychiatric clinics studied later.[9] More descriptive information will be presented in a later section regarding these children. By way of comparison with other studies, however, it seems reasonable to say that our "most disturbed" (see Table 1) group probably includes children who are equivalent to the "emotionally disturbed" in other studies. In addition, there is evidence that some of the children in the other categories could also be considered to have relatively "serious" disturbances. However, the essential description of this sample is an operational one; each child was selected because of a high score on at least one cluster derived from this schedule or, in a small number of cases, on the basis of prior history of disturbance.

Once this group of children was selected, their foster homes -- constituting these 127 on-going placements -- became the subjects of study also. It is important to note that these placements had been in existence for varying lengths of time, representing the first placement for some children and as much as the ninth placement for others. A total of 115 foster homes is represented by the 127 foster children, as twelve children shared a given foster home with another child also selected for study.

Attrition of Cases at Successive Stages of the Study

The initial research design for this study included two separate stages of data collection, primarily for the purposes of studying changes over time in both the child and the placement, as well as the casework process during this interval of time. At a later stage in the planning, a third phase of data collection was included in order to obtain information from the foster children themselves. Some subjects were lost at each stage of data collection, and it is important to be aware of ways in which the sample was affected.

---

[9] D. Fanshel, L. Hylton, and E. F. Borgatta. A study of behavior disorders in children in residential treatment centers. Journal of Psychological Studies, 1963, 14, 1-23.

E. F. Borgatta and D. Fanshel. Behavioral characteristics of children known to psychiatric outpatient clinics (With special attention to adoption status, sex, and age groupings). New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1965.

At the time of the second stage of data collection, approximately seven months after the first, the size of the sample was reduced from the original number of 127 children to 113 children, and from 115 foster homes to 102 homes. This reduction was due primarily to replacement of children. Several of the most disturbed children were among these 14, as 6 children were moved to institutions for the treatment of the emotionally disturbed; 4 others were replaced in different foster homes. There were two refusals at the time of the second stage, one by foster parents themselves to be studied again, and one by a social worker to permit the foster parents to be studied (because of the possible effect on the placement), and, in addition, there were two placements about which insufficient information was obtained from the social worker in the second stage (see Table 2).

Table 2

Changes in the Sample of Children Studied in Successive Phases of Study

Classification of behavior based on Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule	Sequence of Data Collection I Summer 1964		II Spring 1965		III Summer 1965	
Most disturbed	21%	(27)	19%	(21)	18%	(18)
Defiant	18	(23)	19	(22)	19	(19)
Tense-anxious	17	(21)	16	(18)	16	(16)
Disturbed: No definite pattern	24	(30)	26	(29)	27	(27)
Slow	10	(13)	11	(13)	11	(11)
Least disturbed (Selected on basis of history only)	10	(13)	9	(10)	9	(9)
	100%		100%		100%	
Number of children		127		113*		100*
Number of foster homes represented		115		102		90

*These numbers represent the number of children on whom we have complete data; partial data from Round II exists for four additional children, and partial data from Round III exists for three additional children.

The major part of the findings to be presented in subsequent chapters will be based on the 113 children, or 102 homes, which were studied in both Rounds I and II, as the most extensive data analysis was carried out on the children and homes on whom we had complete information.

By the time of the third stage of the data collection, for which the foster parents had received no preparation at the time of the previous stages, an additional 13 children in the sample were dropped; 6 had been, or were expected shortly to be, replaced in another foster home, 1 was placed in an institution for the emotionally disturbed, 1 was at the Wisconsin Diagnostic Center for study, 1 could not be interviewed because of deafness and 4 because of refusals (1 refusal by a foster mother and 3 by social workers to have the homes studied again).

It is particularly important to know whether such changes in a sample introduce marked changes in the characteristics of the group being studied. However, as shown in Table 2, the distribution of the children among the various categories according to the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule remains very much the same over these three stages. And, as will be shown in Chapter IV, the children remaining in the sample at successive stages do not differ significantly in any way from the children studied in the first Round.

Methods and Schedule of Data Collection

The techniques used to obtain information for this study were primarily the structured interview and rating schedules. Prior to their development, detailed objectives of the study were stated, first in general terms of the problems to be resolved and "measures" to be developed before any further planning could take place, and then a more detailed statement of objectives in terms of the specific information needed in order to provide these "measures" and related information. From these statements, the interview schedules were developed, using both closed and open questions, phrased in as direct a way as possible to elicit the perceptions or the factual information desired, but also with regard to the kinds of analysis intended for the data.

The sources of information utilized in each phase of data collection are indicated below:

Prior to Round I (April and May, 1964)

Ratings on Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule made
by social workers (to provide criteria for selection
of sample)

Round I (Summer 1964)

Interviews with social workers

Interviews with foster mothers and with foster fathers

Ratings on Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule made by foster mothers

Written questionnaire completed by teachers

Interval between Round I and Round II

Weekly Behavior Report Forms completed by foster mothers approximately once every four weeks during this interval. The foster mother wrote descriptions of the foster child's "most difficult behavior" and "most pleasing behavior" during the previous week, and of her (and her spouse's) reactions to this behavior.

Report Forms mailed in by social workers during this interval, reporting dates of each visit to foster home, persons talked with and persons involved in a casework interview.

Round II (Spring 1965)

Interviews with social workers

Interviews with foster mothers

Child Behavior Characteristics Schedules completed both by social workers and foster mothers

Attitude questionnaires completed by foster mothers and foster fathers

Written questionnaire completed by teachers

Round III (Summer 1965)

Semi-projective interviews with foster mothers

Semi-projective interviews with foster children

Prior to the first interview, the social workers supervising each foster placement talked with the foster parents to explain the purposes of the study, to ask for their cooperation and to let them know that the study was being conducted with the full knowledge of the agency. They also made clear to the foster parents, as did the interviewers later, that any information provided by them would be regarded as confidential and would be seen only by the research staff, and that only the findings, in which no individuals would be identified, would be given to the workers and agencies. The social workers also contacted the child's teacher, generally in person, explained the general purpose of the study and asked her to complete the questionnaire and mail it in to the research office. Prior to the data collection in Round II and Round III, the social workers also contacted the foster parents to ask for their cooperation again.

The response of the foster parents themselves was on the whole extremely gratifying as a very large majority of them indicated great interest in the study and a feeling of satisfaction at having an opportunity to talk in some detail about their experiences. A further indication of this degree of cooperation is to be found in the ratings made by the interviewers at the close of the Round II interview with the foster mothers. Although most of these mothers had not been specifically prepared for a second interview at the time of the first one, a large majority were rated by the interviewer as having a cooperative attitude toward this second interview both when it began and also when it was completed. By the time it was over, six out of ten mothers were rated as "extremely cooperative", and almost all of the others as "quite cooperative" -- a finding which is particularly impressive when it is remembered that the Round II interview was quite lengthy and somewhat more tedious than the Round I interview. The interviewers rated somewhat over half the mothers as "extremely interested" or "very interested" in the study and rated three-fourths of all the mothers as "quite willing" to be interviewed again. Only two mothers were rated as "not willing" to be interviewed again, but as it turned out, both did actually cooperate in the third round of data collection. There was only one refusal on the part of a foster mother to cooperate in this third interview, which is also an impressive indication of the responsiveness of the foster parents. Because of the very high degree of cooperation and interest which they expressed in the study, a separate report was prepared for the foster parents, focusing particularly on the information provided in their interviews.[10]

---

[10] Focus on Foster Families. Foster Homes Research Project, Wisconsin Department of Public Welfare, 1966. Memeo. 17 p.

Chapter III

EVIDENCE OF THE STABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF CHILDREN BASED ON THE CHILD BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS SCHEDULE

Before examining the various characteristics of the children in our study, it is essential to answer questions such as: How stable are the behavior ratings made by the social workers at different times? What other evidence is there that these children are, in fact, relatively disturbed? Can the Schedule be used to provide a measure of "degree of disturbance?" Since the Schedule had been used prior to this study only as a means of describing children already known to be presenting relatively serious problems (an institutionalized population and a large group of children referred to outpatient clinics), its applicability for studies such as the present one needs to be demonstrated. At various points in this study, other information regarding the behaviors of the children was collected and provides evidence regarding the adequacy of the Schedule for describing this sample of children.

Evidence regarding the stability of the ratings will first be presented in this chapter. Following this, a variety of evidence regarding the behavioral or syndrome classification of the children will be presented -- drawn from the interviews with the social workers and foster mothers, from the Weekly Behavior Report Forms sent in by the foster mothers, and from the Teacher Questionnaire. In addition, the use of the total score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule as a measure of degree of disturbance will be recommended. Evidence for its stability will be presented and other measures of the child's degree of disturbance will be discussed and compared with it.

The Stability of Ratings

We have relatively limited evidence regarding the reliability of the social worker's judgments on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule in terms of repeated judgments at the same point in time.

Ideally, it would have been desirable to have had two different kinds of measures of stability:

(a) In order to assess the agreement of two observers regarding the same child's behavior, there should be two Schedules for each child completed by two workers who know him well.

(b) The same worker should provide two sets of ratings made at a relatively short interval of time, so that the differences occurring would give an indication of unreliability rather than of possible change in a child.

The first method did not seem possible as in most agencies there was only one worker who knew a child well enough to complete the Schedule. The second method was considered at the time of Round II but not carried through because of the burden it would place on the social workers who had already contributed considerable time and effort to this study. The fact that nine workers did not complete a rating schedule for 15 children continuing in this study indicates the difficulty in collecting this kind of information. However, it now appears that it would have been more important to ask the workers to complete the Schedule twice than to have asked for some other kinds of data.

One item ("Is defiant") is repeated in the Schedule, and reliability coefficients of .72 and .76 are obtained from the two administrations of the Schedule, the first in connection with the selection of the sample and the second as part of the Round II collection of data.

The agreement in the workers' descriptions of each child at these two times, approximately ten months apart, however, may be taken as a minimal estimate of the stability of the ratings -- minimal because of the possibility that a lack of agreement in the worker's ratings may reflect actual changes in the child's behavior rather than unreliability of the worker's reports. Since it is the sum of items in given factors which was initially used to determine a child's classification, the correlation coefficients between these sums on separate factors is reported here (see Table 3).[11] When the ratings are made by the same workers at two different times, the degree of agreement is distinctly higher for most factors except one ("Learning Ability A"), which reflects relatively high agreement even among different workers. The extent of relationship for the entire group of children on whom two schedules were completed (98 out of the 113 children

---

[11] See Appendix A for factor loadings and items summed in each factor.

Table 3

Correlation between Scores on Factors in Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule Obtained from Social Worker and Foster Mother Ratings Made at Two Different Times

		All Social Workers (N=98)	Same Social Workers (N=41)	Different Social Workers (N=57)	Social Workers and Foster Mothers (Round I) (N=126)	Foster Mothers (N=98)
I.	Defiance	54[b]	63	49	45	61
II.	Unsocialized	60	80	42	53	74
III.	Tension-Anxiety	34	74	10	24	63
IV.	Withdrawal	58	61	57	43	73
IVa.	Lack of Affection	52	66	42	36	63
V.	Infantilism	43	75	21	34	60
VI.	Over-cleanliness[a]	54	66	46	28	50
VII.	Sex Precociousness[a]	60	85	38	38	59
VIII.	Sex Inhibition[a]	32	66	7	36	52
IX.	Learning Difficulty A	68	65	67	68	79
X.	Learning Difficulty B	65	83	46	45	71
XI.	Likeability[a]	54	59	48	15	58
XII.	Responsibility	59	79	40	42	64
XIII.	Lies and Steals	65	77	57	50	51

[a] Not used in selection of the sample or in any later description of the children for this study.

[b] Decimals are omitted

included in Round II) is relatively low on two factors utilized in developing the initial cluster scores, namely Tension-Anxiety, Infantilism, and on one other factor which was not used in cluster scores or in the selection of the sample (Sex Inhibition).

Since the foster mothers completed the same rating schedule (with slight modifications to simplify the wording), responding to it when the items were read aloud by the interviewer, it is possible to compare their ratings of the children with those of the worker. Over time, the foster mothers show almost as consistently high agreement with themselves as do the same social workers. However, when the perceptions of the social worker are correlated with those of the foster mother, it is apparent that they lack agreement particularly in their perceptions of Tension-Anxiety, Lack of Affection B, and Infantilism, as well as of several of the factors which were omitted completely from the cluster scores (Over-cleanliness and Likeability). Except for Cluster B, to which each of these factors contributes, then, there is consistent evidence of considerable stability in the ratings. The reasons for the lower correlations in the factors of Cluster B cannot be ascertained from our data, however, except by inference from the problems described in the interviews.

Although in general the average of the social workers' scores on each factor for the total group is higher than that of the foster mothers, this would not account for the distinctly lower agreement in regard to certain factors. It does suggest, however, that the social workers regard the child's behavior as more difficult than do the foster mothers. These twelve differences satisfy a test of significance at the .05 level.

Corroborative Evidence of Behavior Classification of Children in the Study

From the Interviews

Since a great deal of information regarding each child's major problems was obtained from both the social worker and the foster mother in answer to open questions during the interviews, this provided a means of checking the classification of the children based on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule.[12] From one point of view this could be regarded as a check of the validity of the Schedule, although it might more appropriately be considered a comparison of two different methods of classifying the children according to their problem behavior, one classification being based on the most "salient" problem behaviors as described in the interviews, and the other on problem behavior as described in a systematic rating schedule.

---

[12] See Appendix B. Major Problem Behaviors of the Child as Described in Interviews by Social Workers and Foster Mothers.

In order to make such a comparison possible, detailed descriptions of the kind of behavior represented in each cluster on the Schedule were prepared in advance, and two raters classified every child according to the information provided in the four interviews regarding his behavior, two with the social worker and two with his foster mother. These categories were then combined by the two raters into one general classification based on all of the interviews. This classification was then compared with that based on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule (see Table 4).

Table 4

Agreement between Behavior Classification of Children
Based on Child Behavior Characteristics
Schedule and Problem Descriptions in Interviews

	Of Children Originally Classified by Cluster Score on Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule					
Were classified on basis of interview data as:	Most Disturbed	Defiant	Tense-Anxious	No def. Pattern	Slow	Least Disturbed
Most disturbed	57%	22%	17%	21%	31%	30%
Defiant	28	58	5	45	15	10
Tense-anxious	5	--	55	3	39	10
Disturbed, but no definite pattern	10	5	23	31	15	30
Slow	--	10	--	--	--	10
Least Disturbed	--	5[a]	--	--	--	10
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of children	21	22	18	29	13	10

---

[a] There is evidence in the interview that this girl had been distinctly "defiant" in her earlier adjustment to the foster home but was no longer showing difficult behavior.

In general, nearly six out of ten of the children in the first three behavior categories according to the Schedule were independently classified in the same category on the basis of the interview information. Fifty-eight percent of the children originally described as "defiant" were also placed in this category according to the information from the interviews, and 55 percent of the children originally classified as "tense-anxious" were placed in this category on the basis of the interviews. It was of particular interest to find that no child was moved from the "defiant" into the "tense-anxious" behavior category on the basis of the interview information, and only one child was moved from "tense-anxious" into the "defiant" group, as we were particularly interested in distinguishing between these two groups of children in some of the later analysis of data. As might be expected, two-thirds of the "no definite pattern" group were reclassified in the "most disturbed" and "defiant" groups. And none of the children originally described as "slow" remained in this category, indicating that both the social workers and foster mothers perceived them as presenting a variety of other kinds of problem behavior.

The detailed coding of the kinds of major problems described in the interviews also supports several assumptions that are made on the basis of the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule classification (see Table 5), for example, that the 10 children included in the study only on the basis of prior history and labeled "least disturbed" are more frequently described as having "no major problems" than any of the other groups. Both social workers and foster mothers mention problems in the general area of "social development" most frequently, with the foster mothers describing a higher proportion of children in the "most disburbed" group as having problems in social development generally and as showing "aggressive, destructive" behavior. However, the greater frequency with which the foster mothers mention problems in each of the categories included in the general area of "social development" (except for "avoidance of social relations") may very probably represent the relative importance of behavior in this area to foster mothers and social workers. The professional workers, on the other hand, are more likely to mention problems related to "appropriate emotional expression," "attitudes toward self" or "intellectual functioning" than the foster mothers.

Table 5

Descriptions in Interviews of Major Problems of Children in Each of the Original Behavior Categories[a]

Are described by social workers as having major problems of these kinds:	Of the children categorized by the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule as: Most Disturbed	Defiant	Tense-Anxious	No def. Pattern	Slow	Least Disturbed
Biological functioning	43[b]	32	39	28	08	30
Social development, general	61	77	39	59	46	50
Aggressive, destructive behavior	14	27	00	07	00	00
Lack of socialization in relations with others or in care of property	29	23	06	41	08	10
Lack of socialization in being a family member	38	32	17	21	31	20
Avoidance of social relations	10	23	28	10	15	30
Appropriate emotional expression	43	36	33	48	15	10
Attitudes toward self	19	14	17	14	38	20
Intellectual functioning	43	36	33	41	77	10
Miscellaneous	00	05	06	03	00	00
No major problems	00	00	06	00	08	40
Are described by foster mothers as having major problems of these kinds:						
Biological functioning	43	18	28	28	46	10
Social development, general	100	77	50	62	69	60
Aggressive, destructive behavior	52	14	17	31	15	30
Lack of socialization in relations with others or in care of property	43	45	17	41	23	30
Lack of socialization in being a family member	61	41	28	10	38	20
Avoidance of social relations	10	05	11	03	15	00
Appropriate emotional expression	24	27	22	31	08	10
Attitudes toward self	00	00	00	00	00	10
Intellectual functioning	19	32	00	31	23	00
Miscellaneous	05	09	00	03	00	00
No major problems	05	05	39	17	31	50
Number of children	21	22	18	29	13	10

[a] See Appendix B for description of codes used.
[b] All figures are percent of children in each behavior group.

From these problem descriptions given in answer to open-ended interview questions, there appears to be greater similarity between the "tense-anxious" and the "slow" groups, and between the "very disturbed", "defiant," and "no pattern" groups.

From Weekly Behavior Report Forms

Another kind of description of the children's problem behavior was obtained through forms which the foster mothers were asked to fill out regularly approximately once a month during the interval of time between Round I and Round II interviews. This form, which was introduced at the time of the Round I interview and then subsequently mailed to the foster family at intervals, consisted of questions asking the mother to "describe the most difficult behavior of the foster child which you or your husband had to handle during the previous week" and to "describe something the foster child did during this same period of time that made you feel particularly good." For each of these behaviors they were also asked to describe in detail what was done in response to this behavior. Approximately two-thirds of the foster mothers continued sending in these forms regularly and from an analysis of the "most difficult behaviors" described in all of them, it is apparent that the same kinds of behaviors are described in these reports covering the previous seven months as are described in the Round II interviews by the foster mothers (see Table 6). In fact, the similarity in the proportion of the children in the various behavior categories who are described in these ways is quite striking and suggests that the "sampling" represented by the answers to the interview questions gives much the same representation of the on-going behavior of the children as these much more detailed reports.

The categorization of the "most pleasing" behaviors as reported by the foster mothers in their Weekly Behavior Reports closely parallels that of the "most difficult" behaviors, although there is a somewhat more frequent mention of behaviors which are grouped under "improvement of socialization in being a family member." It appears then that the foster mothers are both distressed by and pleased with behaviors which may be regarded as opposite sides of the same coin -- the child's learning to live compatibly with the rest of the family and to take his share of responsibility in the group.

Table 6

Descriptions of "Most Difficult" and "Most Pleasing" Behavior of Children in Each of the Original Behavior Categories

	Of the children categorized on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule as:					
Are described by foster mothers in Weekly Behavior Reports as showing "most difficult" behavior of these kinds:	Most Disturbed	Defiant	Tense-Anxious	No def. Pattern	Slow	Least Disturbed
Biological functioning	33[a]	27	06	14	15	20
Social development, general	90	86	61	79	69	100
Aggressive, destructive behavior	57	45	17	31	38	40
Lack of socialization in relations with others or in care of property	48	68	39	38	54	50
Lack of socialization in being a family member	71	55	33	59	54	40
Avoidance of social relations	00	00	00	00	00	00
Appropriate emotional expression	19	23	22	10	31	20
Attitudes toward self	00	14	00	10	15	00
Intellectual functioning	10	19	11	28	38	10
Miscellaneous	10	00	00	14	08	20
No major problems	00	00	11	03	15	10
Are described by foster mothers in Weekly Behavior Reports as showing "most pleasing" behavior of these kinds:						
Social development, general	86	86	72	79	77	80
Improvement of socialization with others - property	38	41	17	38	23	40
Improvement of socialization in being a family member	76	73	72	66	77	70
Appropriate emotional expression	24	27	39	34	38	40
Attitudes toward self	00	05	00	00	00	00
Intellectual functioning	43	45	28	34	38	50
Miscellaneous	10	19	00	10	08	00
No major problems	00	00	00	03	00	00
Number of children	21	22	18	29	13	10

---

[a] All figures are percent of children in each behavior group.

From the Teacher Questionnaire

The Teacher Questionnaire was also used to check the classification of the children derived from the clusters on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule. Since the teacher is an independent source of information and observes the child in a different setting than either the social worker or the foster mother, the agreement between her evaluations and those of the social worker provides further evidence of the validity of the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule. The data from the Teacher Questionnaire Round I were treated in the same way as the original data from the Child Behavior Schedule: the mean and standard deviation of each cluster from the Teacher Questionnaire (developed with a "second order" factor analysis based on the first order factors) that most closely described the kinds of behavior represented by the "defiant," "tense-anxious," and "slow" clusters were computed and each child was rated high, middle or low on each cluster.[13] Sixty percent of the children were given the same classification on the defiant cluster by the teacher and the social worker, and 61 percent of the children were classified in the same way on the tense-anxious cluster. It is also significant that only two children in each cluster were placed in one extreme group according to one source and in the other extreme group by the second. Fifty-seven percent of the children were also classified in the same group on the slow cluster, with seven children showing discrepant classification from one extreme group to the other.

Evidence of Degree of Disturbance from Interview Data and from Total Scores on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule

An important question regarding the use of the behavior classification derived from the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule is whether it can provide a measure of "degree of disturbance." As originally described, the classification consists of certain "syndromes." It was assumed that a general ordering of "degree of disturbance" could be described in the following way:

1. The "most disturbed" would consist of all of those children in the "very disturbed" group having high scores on all three clusters.

---

[13] See Appendix C for a report of the Teacher Questionnaire.

2. The "disturbed" group would consist of those children with high scores on the defiant or tense-anxious clusters or those with no distinctive pattern on the clusters.
3. The "somewhat less disturbed" would be those children in the slow cluster, as it could be assumed that these children were somewhat less disturbed than those showing other kinds of behavior difficulties.
4. The "least disturbed" would be those children who had no high scores on the clusters but were selected on the basis of prior history.

In addition, the total score on the entire Schedule has been used, omitting those items which were not included in any of the three clusters (items regarding sex behavior, over-cleanliness, and likeability). The basic assumption involved in using the total score is that the items have approximately equal weight and therefore may be combined in a sum. The total score shows a correlation coefficient of .61 with a rough categorization of "degree of disturbance" described above. That it is not higher is doubtless due to the considerable range shown in each of these syndrome groups (see Table 7).

Table 7

Distribution of Total Scores on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule for Each of the Original Behavior Categories

	Of the children categorized by the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule as:					
Total Score on the Schedule:	Most Disturbed	Defiant	Tense-Anxious	No def. Pattern	Slow	Least Disturbed
125-153	29%	14%	--	--	--	--
111-124	52	4	11%	14%	8%	--
101-110	19	14	16	42	15	--
91-100	--	32	39	31	8	10%
84-90	--	27	22	10	39	20
74-83	--	9	6	3	15	40
60-73	--	--	6	--	15	30
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Children	21	22	18	29	13	10

The wealth of information provided in the interviews with the social workers and foster mothers was also utilized. During this procedure (described on page 18), the two raters not only classified each child in one of the cluster groups according to the information provided in the interviews, but also categorized his behavior according to "degree of disturbance." The information obtained from the four separate interviews was then combined in one five-point rating scale summarizing the "degree of disturbance" indicated in the four interviews. This completely independent rating based on the four interviews shows a correlation coefficient of .47 with the total score based on the first Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule filled out by the social workers, and an even higher correlation with total scores on subsequent schedules completed by the social workers and the foster mothers (see Table 8).

Table 8

Correlations of Various Measures of "Degree of Disturbance"

From the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule	From the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule Total Scores				Original Categorization of Children based on Cluster Scores[a]	From Subjective Ratings Based on all Interviews
Total Scores	Social Worker Round I	Social Worker Round II	Foster Mother Round I	Foster Mother Round II		
Social Worker Round I	--					
Social Worker Round II	62[b]	--				
Foster Mother Round I	39	48	--			
Foster Mother Round II	33	46	68	--		
Original Categorization of Children based on Cluster Scores[a]	61	35	17	14	--	
From Subjective Ratings based on all interviews	47	60	48	51	23	--
From Total Score on Teacher Questionnaire	44	53	33	33	20	40

Number of cases = 113

[a] The original classification of children selected for the study was translated into a rough score of degree of disturbance as follows: 1 = Disturbed in all 3 clusters, 2 = high in Defiant or Unresponsive clusters or with No pattern, 3 = high only in Slow cluster, 4 = not high in any cluster.

[b] Decimal points are omitted.

The ordering of "degree of disturbance" based on the initial categorization of the children shows a correlation coefficient of only .23 with the interview rating, suggesting that it is a much less satisfactory measure of degree of disturbance than either the interview ratings or the total score on the Schedule.

In addition to this overall rating based on the interviews, two subjective ratings made by the social workers in the interview schedules also serve as indicators of the validity of the total score as a measure of degree of disturbance. One of these, "How difficult is this child to have in a family group," correlates .47 (Round I) and .58 (Round II) with the total score. This rating gives an indication of the child's disturbance, although evidence was found that the workers took other dimensions into account when making the rating. For example, a note from the worker under one rating read, "He's not at all difficult; the foster mother won't allow it." Other children had not been in the home long enough for the workers to feel confident of their Round I ratings; and, as mentioned previously, changes in the child between the two sets of interviews could (and some workers said "did") occur and lower the Round II correlation. Nevertheless, this measure of the disturbance the child exhibits in a family group supports the overall measure of the child's "degree of disturbance."

A summary of the degree to which the child's emotional needs interfere with his functioning in various situations (in interaction with foster parents and peers and in frustrating and non-frustrating work situations), all made by the social worker in the Round I interview, correlates .62 with the total score. Because it scales the children by display of emotional disturbance in four different situations, it is a more general rating and is, in this way, a measure similar to the total degree of disturbance measure.

Similar evidence is obtained from the total score derived from the Teacher Questionnaire Round I. It correlates .40 with the interview rating and .44 with the total score on the Schedule completed by the social worker. However, it shows lower correlations with the score on the Schedules completed by the foster mothers and a correlation of .20 with the classification based on the categorization of the children.

Evidence of the relative stability of the total score is to be found in the correlation of .62 between the total score obtained from the initial Schedules filled out by the social workers to provide a basis for the selection of the sample, and the Schedules filled out ten months later by the social workers at the time of Round II. The total score obtained from the foster mother at two different times shows similar stability (r = .68) (see Table 8). One further bit of evidence of the stability of this measure is to be found in the consistently high correlations of each separate cluster score with the total (see Table 9). These correlation coefficients are remarkably uniform, suggesting that each cluster score accounts for approximately the same amount of variance in its relationship with the total score as either of the others.

Table 9

Correlation Coefficients Between Each Cluster Sum and the Total Score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule

Separate Cluster Sums	Total Score of Ratings Made by:			
	Social Worker: Round I	Social Worker: Round II	Foster Mother: Round I	Foster Mother: Round II
From Social Worker Round I				
Defiant	72	47	38	27
Tense-anxious	74	41	18	19
Slow	74	49	32	29
From Social Worker Round II				
Defiant	51	73	32	25
Tense-anxious	45	82	36	40
Slow	48	77	44	43
From Foster Mother Round I				
Defiant	30	36	74	45
Tense-anxious	38	45	79	59
Slow	34	39	74	58
From Foster Mother Round II				
Defiant	33	47	63	77
Tense-anxious	22	38	55	70
Slow	26	40	54	70

Since there is considerably better evidence for the validity of the total score as a measure of "degree of disturbance" than the earlier measure developed on the basis of the categorization of the children, this is the measure subsequently used in the analysis of the data.

Summary

Since this Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule had not been used heretofore to describe children whose behavior was not already known to be disturbed, the relationship between the ratings from the Schedule with other evidences of "disturbance" was studied primarily to establish the meaning of this rating for this sample and to justify its use throughout the study of these children. The weaknesses of the use of these various ratings have been pointed out throughout the chapter -- primarily the time differences between the ratings used to determine reliability, the range of generality among some ratings, and the frames of references from which the mother, worker, and teacher judge the same child. As could be expected, the correlations are higher for ratings made by the same raters and at the same point in time than between different raters and at different times. Because of this variability, each correlation should be interpreted separately in light of intervening variables (such as change in the child that could have occurred during the study and the situation in which the rater most often sees him) and of the meanings of the variables concerned. All of the correlations reported here were found to be statistically significant; and, although some are considerably lower than others they are presented here so that the reader may judge for himself the merits of the Schedule and the use of its total score as a measure of the child's "degree of disturbance."

As researchers, we have made our decision in favor of the Schedule as the most general "measure" we have in this study of the child's "degree of disturbance," as every other rating or source of classification of the children has its own limitations and specificity.

Chapter IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOSTER CHILDREN STUDIED

In this chapter information regarding the characteristics of the foster children will be presented, both (1) to examine changes in the characteristics of the sample which have occurred in successive stages of the study, and (2) to examine relationships between these various characteristics and the "degree of disturbance" shown by the child. Most of the information reported here has been obtained from the social worker, but some has been provided by the foster mothers. The results of the semi-projective interviews with the foster children and their foster mothers will be presented later in Chapter X.

Changes in the Characteristics of This Group of Foster Children at Successive Stages in the Study

Approximately two-thirds of the foster children in this study are boys, one-third girls (see Table 10). During the early summer of 1964, 32 percent were eight years or younger, whereas 45 percent were 11 years or older. By the time they were studied during the summer of 1965, thus nearly half were twelve years or older. However, the reduction in the size of the sample had a negligible effect on the distribution.

Included in this study are children who left their natural families at a very early age (15 percent having left them at the age of twelve months or less) and also children who spent at least the first seven years of their lives with their natural families (26 percent). The age at which a child left his natural family of course correlates highly (-.70) with the number of years he has been away from them, but it is of interest to note that only a very small number of the children in this study (7 percent) lived with their natural families within the two years prior to the beginning of the study, and that half of all the children have been separated from their natural families for six or more years.

There is great variation also in the number of foster home placements experienced by these children; approximately one-fifth of the group is in their first foster home, whereas nearly half have experienced two or more prior placements. The length of their present foster home placement also varies, with 14 percent of the original 127 children having been in their present foster home for only six months or less, and 23 percent of this group having lived in their present foster home for six years or more. The relationship of these items to each other will be presented in a later section in this chapter, dealing with the degree of disturbance shown by the child.

Table 10

Changes in the Characteristics of the Foster Children in the Study Due to Attrition

	Characteristics of 127 children studied in Round I (Summer, 1964)	Characteristics of 113 children studied in Round II (Spring, 1965)	Characteristics of 100 children studied in Round III (Summer, 1965)
Sex			
Male	65%	64%	63%
Female	35	36	37
	100%	100%	100%
Age (Summer, 1964)[a]			
6-8	25%	24%	25%
9-11	40	38	38
12-14	35	38	37
	100%	100%	100%
Age of Child When He Left Natural Family			
Less than 2 years	20%	22%	23%
2-5	33	33	35
6-7	21	19	17
8-9	26	26	25
	100%	100%	100%
Number of Years Child Has Been Away From His Natural Family			
0-2	7%	7%	8%
3-5	43	42	40
6 or more	50	51	52
	100%	100%	100%
Number of Previous Placements			
None	25%	21%	23%
One	28	28	28
2-3	33	36	36
4-5	14	15	13
	100%	100%	100%

Table 10, continued

Length of Time in Present Placement	N = 127	N = 113	N = 100
0-6 months	14%	15%	13%
7 mos. - 1 year	9	10	11
1-2	13	13	14
3-5	41	38	36
6-12	23	24	26
	100%	100%	100%
Guardianship or Custody Case			
Guardianship	61%	61%	62%
Custody	39	39	38
	100%	100%	100%
Degree of disturbance as indicated by total score on Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule			
Least disturbed: 60-73	6%	5%	6%
74-83	9	9	8
84-90	16	18	17
91-100	21	22	23
101-110	20	21	23
111-124	18	17	16
Most disturbed: 125-158	10	8	7
	100%	100%	100%

[a] Obviously age changes over time. However, since the purpose of this table is to indicate changes in the sample of children over the successive stages of this study, the original age grouping is maintained for the comparison so that changes in each group will be evident.

Although the number of children included in the study diminished from 127 in Round I to 100 in Round III, their distribution according to the major characteristics listed in Table 10 remained much the same. The principal way in which they changed was in the loss of six "very disturbed" children between Rounds I and II (6 in the "most disturbed" group described in Table 2 in Chapter II). This change is reflected in the slight change in the distribution of the children according to the total score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule, but neither this change nor any other could be regarded as a significant change in the characteristics of the total group.

The Foster Child's Relationship with
His Natural Family

The Legal Status of the Foster Child

Over three-fifths (61 percent) of the original sample of 127 children are under the guardianship of the State, which means that parental rights have been terminated. The remaining 39 percent are in the legal custody of the State, with their natural parents retaining parental rights and possibly regaining the care of the child in time. Not all of these families are interested, however, according to the worker; only 57 percent of the children in custody have natural relatives who would like to have them returned to them.

However, nearly three-fourths of all the children in the study (72 percent) are reported by the workers to be continuing to see some family members. Included in this group are the 53 percent who have one or more siblings living in the same foster home with them, but most of these children (39 percent of the total group) also see other family members. Only 28 percent of the children in the study have no contact with any member of their natural family; most of these are under the guardianship of the State, but a small number (7 children) are in its custody.

Because of the difference in the legal status of the child's family under guardianship and under custody, it would be expected that the children in the custody of the state would show more evidence of interest in their natural families. This is the case (although the correlations are all relatively low, .31 or less) in that these children in custody are reported as more likely to talk about their natural families and to see some members of the family away from the foster home. However, they are no more likely than children in guardianship to be visited in the foster home by a member of their natural family. Whether any members of a family visit a child is apparently determined by many factors, as there is no correlation between the occurrence of such visiting and the length of time a child has been away from his natural family.

The fact that all parental rights have been removed by the court does not mean that the natural family of a child is not interested in having him returned. Fourteen children under the guardianship of the state have natural relatives who have expressed a desire to the agency to have the child returned to them, eleven of these relatives being parents of the child. However since it is very unlikely that these children will ever be returned to their families, their conflict of loyalties between their natural and foster families, as reported by the social worker, is especially strong. These fourteen children represent an extreme group, although not a unique one: out of the 42 children (14 under guardianship and 28 in custody) whose families are said by the social worker to want to have them back, only two are said to have some chance -- even this not a very great one -- of returning to their families. And yet many of these are children whose natural families are continuing both to visit them and to see them away from the foster home.

Since the supervising social workers were interviewed a second time regarding each foster child and his placement, there was an opportunity to inquire regarding changes in the child's attitude toward his natural family or their interest in him. Although the number of changes is relatively small within the total group, this information is of some interest in revealing the kinds of fluctuations which occur in such situations. Only seven out of the total sample of children were said by their workers to show less interest in their natural families: three because of the security they have found in the foster home, two because of their "adjustment to the separation," and two because of the rejection from the natural family members and their apparent preference for their present living situation. Thirteen foster children were described as having become more interested in their natural relatives: nine because of a change in the actual presence of the family, seeing them more often, their greater availability because of having been released from jail, etc.; three others are said to be more interested because they have accepted their status as foster children and have resolved their feelings over having two families; only one child was described as more interested in his natural family because the security of his present placement was being threatened. It appears that the change in the natural family's interest in the child is significantly related to his change in interest in them (r=.34).

Conflict of the Foster Child

A general question regarding the child's conflict of loyalties was asked the social worker during both interviews:

> "To what extent does this child have a conflict of loyalties between his own family and the foster family?"

Although there is some evidence that a few workers focused only on one aspect of this "conflict of loyalties," particularly translating it as a question regarding the child's identity or whether he "knew who he was," most of the workers attempted an over-all evaluation of the child's conflict between his two families. Some children's conflict is described more in terms of great resentment toward their natural family than as a desire to belong to two families. However, there is no question but that we have an evaluation from the worker which indicates the general intensity of the child's feeling about having been separated from his natural family rather than a precise "conflict" of loyalties. Some examples of the variety of ways in which this was described by the workers follow:

> "...Quite extensive confusion. He can still remember his natural family and the first and second foster homes, and there has been very little interpretation to him as to why he left these homes."
>
> Of a rather bitter foster child the social worker says: "There is a conflict but not of loyalties. She doesn't set one parent against the other. She completely rejects her natural mother, and this affects her whole behavior."
>
> "A feeling of resentment at the rejection and ejection of her own family."
>
> "She has expressed bewilderment about parental loyalty -- 'which parents' -- to me."
>
> "She doesn't accurately remember her parents and to some extent idealizes her mother."

It appears that "conflict" of the foster child has a more general meaning of anxiety which he feels because of his status as a foster child. This anxiety may be expressed in resentment toward his natural family, his confusion over why he is different from other children (this question arising most often in school, where the children ask why his name isn't the same as that of his foster parents, or even of one of his siblings who attends the same school), and his realization of the lack of permanence in his present foster home placement. In some instances, it is clear that foster children are likely to indulge in fantasy and idealization of their natural parents just as adopted children are and that a few do this to a marked degree. In contrast with adopted children, however, a problem unique to foster children is that they are likely to be aware that they are "foster," and many have feelings of impermanence and "not really belonging." Some foster mothers described this as follows:

> "He always tells us that we aren't his real mother and dad. When he first came he said he was going back to his real 'ma.' Lately he has started to call me 'Ma.'"
>
> "Well, I think this (explaining to himself the roles of his foster and natural families) is a real problem for (child). He gets real disgusted at times. He says his 'other mother' and explains which one he means. He does say he's going to live with his brother when he grows up. I think this is a real problem for (child)."
>
> "She can't make an adjustment to the two families. This is her problem."

As might be expected, the conflict is somewhat greater for those children whose natural relatives want them returned than for those children whose relatives have expressed no such interest (r = .24). Conflict is also significantly related to the length of time a child has been in foster care (r = .34) and the age at which he left his natural family (r = .30). The children who have been away from their natural families the longest and who left them at an early age show the least conflict according to the workers. (See Table 11). For example, a larger proportion of the children described as having no conflict (33 percent) left their families before they were two years of age than did children showing high conflict now (none), and 69 percent of the children described as having high conflict now were at least six years old before they left their natural families, whereas only 40 percent of the children described as having no conflict were of this age or older.

An examination of the reasons why these children were separated from their natural families may throw some light on these relationships. As part of the Round I interview (question 13), the social workers were asked why the child was separated from his natural family. We find that consistently larger proportions of children among those who were over one year of age when separated are reported to have experienced neglect or abuse than of those who were one year of age or younger (see Table 12). However, the most striking finding is that almost every child in the entire sample came from a natural family which is reported to have neglected, abused, abandoned him, or to have shown inadequate parental behavior in other ways. Only seven children in the group were separated for "other reasons," and only four of these came from situations in which no rejection is indicated: the death of both parents is given as the reason why three came into the care of the State and the inability of a young mother to care for her baby is the reason for the fourth; in the other instances desertion of one parent followed the death of the other, and a recently-acquired step-parent refused to accept the child.

Although the complex interaction of these various factors in a child's circumstances and life experience up to the present time makes it very difficult to make any sort of precise statement about one factor, it appears that the conflict a child experiences in his desire to belong both to his natural family and his foster family or families is related to his emotional problems. One worker expressed it this way:

Table 11

Correlations between the Foster Child's "Degree of Disturbance" and Various Aspects of His Placement History

	Child's degree of disturbance	Age child left his natural family	Length of time child has been in foster care	Number of child's previous placements	Length of present placement	Child's degree of conflict Round I	Child's degree of conflict Round II
Child's degree of disturbance	--						
Age child left his natural family	.11	--					
Length of time child has been in foster care	-.08	-.70	--				
Number of child's previous placements	.29	-.19	.18	--			
Length of present placement	-.33	-.53	.63	-.25	--		
Child's degree of conflict Round I	.21	.31	-.33	.12	-.27	--	
Child's degree of conflict Round II	.28	.32	-.33	.14	-.39	.43	--
How difficult is the child to have in a family group Round I	.47	.08	-.05	.22	-.24	.20	.21
How difficult is the child to have in a family group Round II	.58	.08	-.08	.19	-.28	.14	.37
Presence of child's siblings in same foster home	.01	.07	.08	.03	.05	-.19	-.16
Child talks of his natural family	.09	.33	-.27	-.03	-.31	.09	
Age of child	-.01	.33	.32	-.05	.20	-.01	.06

N = 113 $r_{05} = .18$

$r_{01} = .24$

> "(conflict) is the crux of the matter -- it's the basic reason, the over-weighing reason, for her behavior problems."

For example, the social workers report that the children with the greatest degree of conflict are those whose own emotional needs hinder them in their interaction with the foster parents (r = .27) and also those who are the most difficult to have in the foster homes (r = .39). The children with the greatest conflict have been in their present placement for a shorter length of time than the children with the least conflict, and have also had more placements. (See Table 11).

Table 12

Relationship between Age at Which Child Left His Natural Family and Reasons Given by the Social Worker for the Separation

Reasons given by social workers for separation	Age at which child left his natural family							
	1 year or younger		Over 1 year through 4 years		Over 4 years through 7 years		Over 7 years	
Neglect or abuse	11%)	42%	35%)	92%	14%)	87%	36%)	72%
Neglect or abuse in combination with other evidence of parental inadequacy	31)		57)		73)		36)	
Parental inadequacy	11		5				4	
Desertion or abandonment	5		3		10		7	
Child illegitimate, not wanted, given up	37		--		--		--	
Other reasons	5		--		3		17	
	100%		100%		100%		100%	
Number of Children	19		37		29		28	

The Attitude of the Foster Parents toward the Natural Family

As reported by social workers. At the time of the Round I interviews 49 of the foster children were being visited in their foster homes by at least one relative (and the social workers were asked to evaluate the foster parents' attitude toward these relatives). Considerable variation in the foster parents' reactions to these natural family members were reported. Examples of these reactions are:

"Hostility, because of getting (foster child) into this situation."

"Quite negative; natural parents abused the privilege of visiting -- fell asleep watching TV in foster home."

"Sympathetic, but also one of rivalry. She (foster mother) tends to discourage contact."

"She (foster mother) likes the natural parents and is very fond of child's sister."

"Very tolerant. Tell child (his) parents were good but had problems."

"No attitude. Don't consider them. Feel (foster child) is their own."

There are small but statistically significant relationships between a favorable attitude on the part of the foster mothers and the length of time they have been foster parents, with those who have been foster parents a shorter length of time being more accepting of the natural family. Those mothers who are reported as most accepting of the natural family are also said to be most tolerant of the foster child's behavior (r = .26). There is also a small but significant relationship between the social workers' evaluation of the foster parents as having unusual motives for being foster parents, reflecting deep-seated personality needs, and their lack of acceptance of the natural family members (r = .23).

As reported by foster mothers. Nearly two-thirds of the foster mothers report that they have met one or more members of the child's natural family, with only a very few being restricted to one member only. More (41 percent) have met siblings of the foster child; next, the child's mother (35 percent); and then the child's father (29 percent), with a smaller proportion having met the child's grandparents or other relatives such as aunts, uncles or cousins. However, only a small proportion of the mothers (10 percent of the total number) say that knowing these relatives of the child makes any difference in the way in which they think of their relationship with the child, although a larger proportion (23 percent) admit that the child's contacts with his own family have made some problems for them. All but one-fourth of the foster mothers report that the child talks at times about members of his natural family. They report a variety of comments or questions asked by the child, some of which indicate strong emotional ties to the natural family, or some positive feeling toward one or more members, but only a very few of the foster mothers report that the child expresses clearly negative feelings or provides derogatory information about a member of this natural family. That the child's relationship with his natural family is of considerable concern and interest to the foster mothers is indicated in their readiness to answer the question, "How does (child) seem to explain to himself (herself) who you are and who his (her) own family is?" Only six percent of the foster mothers responded to this question with a "don't know." The others gave answers distributed as follows:

	Percent of all children
Completely identifies with the foster family	4%
"She doesn't know yet that we aren't her real family."	
Apparently identifies with the foster family	10
"He calls me 'Mom' and (foster father) 'Dad' -- We never told him what to call us. He never mentions his own parents."	
Knows he's a foster child but identifies with foster family	35
"She doesn't (explain her natural family and foster family). She seems contented. Once she asked and I said some parents can't take care of children, so we took you because we loved you and she said she was so happy we had."	
Maintains distance between himself and natural family	7
"Well, she knows her mother wasn't fit to take care of her and has no desire to go back to her. She wants to call me 'Mother', but I feel she has a mother of her own. She calls me 'Aunt'."	
Maintains distance between himself and foster family	7
"I think she thinks she is staying here until she can go home. I guess her mother told her she would stay here till she grew up and then she would go home. (Foster child) wasn't used to minding. She can't wait to leave. She wants to go back to running the streets and doing as she pleased. Her sister is just the opposite. She's happy here but (foster child) is just biding her time."	
Confused over meaning of foster care	12
"He has been very slow in comprehending this situation of 'where have I come from.' He has never really understood. He doesn't understand the concept of birth. He knows I'm not his real mother. They (the other children in the home) talked about this among themselves, but he doesn't really comprehend."	
"He can't explain to himself who foster and natural parents are, even though he has been here two years. Everyone is a mama. My mother was a big mama. Every man is daddy. Even the insurance man was Mr. daddy."	

> "He's at a stage where he doesn't know (who his real parents are). Just as when he got a card from his mother. Then he asked me who I was. I tried to tell him I was his foster mother and she took care of him when he was a tiny baby and he said no. He called the previous foster mother Grandma."

Accepts two sets of parents 19%

> "He mentions why he wasn't with his parents. He thinks that they became ill while he and his brothers were small and weren't able to take care of them. He seems to think he should go from one foster home to another. He seems to feel now that this is more permanent."

Thorough confusion on the part of a foster child is illustrated in the following statement by a foster mother:

> "She got mixed up after they (natural parents) came. She had difficulty in explaining her 'own' mother, her foster mother, and the 'new' mother (her own mother with a new baby). She says she has an old mother somewhere, but she doesn't associate her with the mother who has new babies."

A small proportion of the foster mothers (17 percent) indicated that they were trying to change the child's thinking about his relationship with them, mainly trying to get him to think of himself as part of the foster family, or to think of their home as his permanent home. They reported that 35 percent of the children were using the foster family's last name as their own. This suggests that the foster mothers or foster families are eager to provide as much security for the child as they possibly can. It should be noted, however, that in three-fourths of the instances where they report that the child uses the foster family's last name, the mothers also report that they expect the child to stay with them until he has grown or finished his education.

"Long-term Plans" for the Child

As part of the Round I interview, the foster mothers were asked regarding the "long-term plans" for the foster child, in order to ascertain their understanding and perceptions of these. A majority of the mothers (60 percent) indicated that they expect the foster child to remain in their home until he is grown, with a small number mentioning plans to adopt the child. It is not surprising that these expectations of the foster parents regarding future plans for the foster child are related to the degree of conflict which the foster parents report the child has. A larger proportion of those children described as having no conflict regarding their natural family and the foster family are also described as likely to stay in the foster home until grown than of those described as having a high degree of his natural family is of considerable concern and interest to the foster mothers is indicated in their readiness to answer the question, "How does (child) seem to explain to himself (herself) who you are and who his (her) own family is?" Only six percent of the foster mothers responded to this question with a "don't know." The others gave answers distributed as follows:

Percent of
all children

Completely identifies with the foster family 4%

> "She doesn't know yet that we aren't her real family."

Apparently identifies with the foster family 10

> "He calls me 'Mom' and (foster father) 'Dad' -- We never told him what to call us. He never mentions his own parents."

Knows he's a foster child but identifies with foster family 35

> "She doesn't (explain her natural family and foster family). She seems contented. Once she asked and I said some parents can't take care of children, so we took you because we loved you and she said she was so happy we had."

Maintains distance between himself and natural family . . . 7

> "Well, she knows her mother wasn't fit to take care of her and has no desire to go back to her. She wants to call me 'Mother', but I feel she has a mother of her own. She calls me 'Aunt'."

Maintains distance between himself and foster family 7

> "I think she thinks she is staying here until she can go home. I guess her mother told her she would stay here till she grew up and then she would go home. (Foster child) wasn't used to minding. She can't wait to leave. She wants to go back to running the streets and doing as she pleased. Her sister is just the opposite. She's happy here but (foster child) is just biding her time."

Confused over meaning of foster care 12

> "He has been very slow in comprehending this situation of 'where have I come from.' He has never really understood. He doesn't understand the concept of birth. He knows I'm not his real mother. They (the other children in the home) talked about this among themselves, but he doesn't really comprehend."

> "He can't explain to himself who foster and natural parents are, even though he has been here two years. Everyone is a mama. My mother was a big mama. Every man is daddy. Even the insurance man was Mr. daddy."

conflict (60 percent as compared with 34 percent in the foster mothers' reports.) And the longer a child has been in the foster home, the more likely the foster parents are to report that they expect him to stay with them until he is grown. Of the children who have been in the foster home for a least three years, none is expected to leave, according to the foster mothers, and of those children who have been in the foster home for only a year or less only one is expected to stay until he is grown.

There are no sex differences with respect to the foster parents' expectations for the child. Half the boys and slightly over half the girls are described by the foster mothers as expected to remain in the foster home until they are grown.

Relationship of Various Characteristics of the Child to His "Degree of Disturbance"

One of the questions which it is important to consider carefully is whether there are relationships between a child's early experiences and the degree of disturbance which he reveals. For even though causality cannot be demonstrated or proven through the determination of relationships, it is possible that some findings could be of practical value in making plans for foster children.

Throughout this discussion the measure of the child's "degree of disturbance" is his total score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule unless otherwise indicated.[14] As described in the previous chapter, there is more substantial evidence of the validity of this score than of any other "measure" of "degree of disturbance" which might be used.

Neither sex nor age of the child shows a significant relationship with his degree of disturbance. A cross tabulation of sex of the child with the total score does not reveal significant differences between boys and girls even in the extreme groups, that is, when those with total scores in the 111 to 153 range are compared with those having total scores in the 60 to 90 range (the mean for the total group is 100).

---

[14] As is made clear in Chapter III, this Total Score is the total of all the scores on the factors which were used in the initial selection of the children for this study and does not include four factors or their constituent items which were not so used. Strictly speaking, we should call it a "Total score with exceptions" but for the sake of brevity will refer to it as the "Total score."

The age at which these children left their natural families (ranging from early infancy to 11 years) shows a high correlation with the length of time they have been in foster care (-.70), as would be expected, but neither item is significantly related to the degree of disturbance shown by the child. (See Table 11) Taken alone, then, it appears that age at placement or the length of time in foster care in itself has no bearing on the degree of disturbance shown by a child. However, the number of placements which a child experiences is related to his degree of disturbance (.29), and if age at which a child left his natural family and his number of placements are combined, the resultant multiple R (.34) is slightly higher. This relationship is also reflected in the negative relationship between the length of the child's present foster home placement and his degree of disturbance; the more "disturbed" children have been in their present placements for shorter periods of time (-.33).

This tends to lend substantiation to a point of view in casework that the child's confusion and mixed feelings between his natural family and his foster family is one of the factors producing disturbed behavior. Evidence for this is to be found in the relationship between the caseworker's rating of the degree of conflict shown by the child relative to these two "families" and his degree of disturbance (.28). The longer his present placement, the less conflict he tends to show (r = -.39).

An understanding of the dynamics involved here would require a careful study of the conditions existing during the child's period of living with his natural family and the nature of his ties to his parents, as well as of the circumstances leading to his placement in a foster home. Unfortunately in this study we do not have this degree of detail, even though, as indicated earlier in this chapter, information was gathered regarding the reasons for the child's leaving his natural family as well as for each change in placement. However, an assessment of the relationship which existed between the child and his family is much more complex, but would seem to be an important dimension to study.

For these children a fairly high negative correlation appears between the age at which a child left his natural family and the length of his present placement (-.53). Part of the explanation for this is undoubtedly to be found in the fact that seven of the chidren in this sample have lived with the same foster family since the time prior to their second birthday. One immediately questions how such children happen to be included in a sample of "disturbed" children, and whether the foster homes in which they have lived so long may be contributing to the development of their "disturbed" behavior rather than to the lessening of such behavior. In an attempt to answer these and other questions, we studied the interviews regarding these children and found a variety of conditions and circumstances surrounding their care.[15] All but one of the seven children has a total score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule below the mean for the group. However, with one exception, they met the initial requirements for inclusion in the sample because of a high score in one of the clusters; the exception was a child who was added because of a prior history of "disturbance." Several of these children apparently gave evidence of "disturbance" even before their early placements. The homes in which several have been living since an early age are rated as "poor" in terms of the care they are providing. We can only conclude that the mere fact of an early and continuing placement has no predictive value in regard to the "absence of disturbance" in the child or how satisfactory his present foster care is regarded by the social worker.

What about these children with multiple placements? Is there any indication as to why they have been moved more frequently? Of the 17 children who have had 4 or more placements prior to the present one, there is clear evidence in the interviews that all but 2 experienced rejection in prior placement(s) due to their difficult behavior and the foster parents' inability to accept it and continue to care for them. The total scores of these children, indicating their "degree of disturbance", are above the mean for the total sample in 12 out of 17 instances and range from extremely high scores to two relatively low ones (which happen to be the scores of the two children for whom there is no evidence of rejection in a previous placement). And although not all of these children who have had the greatest number of placements have left their natural families at a later age (4 left them prior to the age of two years), a majority (59 percent) were five years or older when they left.

For the entire group of children, there is a significant relationship between the number of placements a child has had and both his degree of disturbance and the social worker's rating of how difficult he is to have in a family group. And there are significant negative relationships between the length of his present placement and the degree of conflict he is said to have, his "degree of disturbance," and the social worker's rating of how difficult he is. For example, only 14 percent of the foster children described as "extremely difficult" have been in the foster home for as long as six years, whereas 72 percent of the children described as "not at all difficult" have been there at least that long. Whether siblings are present in the same foster home with them does not have any relationship to their degree of conflict or degree of disturbance.

---

[15] See Appendix D for a detailed description of these seven children.

It appears, then, that factors related to the child's "disturbed" behavior are placement at a later age coupled with replacements, often necessitated by the child's difficult behavior, which in turn is related to the degree of conflict he has over his natural family and his foster family. It is not possible to say from our data what the sequence of these factors is -- and doubtless it differs from one child to another. However, it would seem that one way for casework to attempt to interrupt this chain of events (which, if uninterrupted, is only likely to increase a child's problems and the likelihood of replacement) is to put maximum effort into the first placement of an older child, working directly with both the child and the foster parents and also with the natural family members. Helping the foster parents understand and handle the child's conflict regarding his natural family, as well as handle his difficult behavior which is an expression of this conflict would seem to be particularly important. Doubtless caseworkers are well aware of this need, and it is mentioned here only because the data of this study also lead one to conclude that this first placement of an older child is a crucial stage in his foster care. Furthermore, there is considerable evidence in the interviews that the foster mothers in particular are sympathetic with the child and his conflict, and on the whole are accepting of the natural families and also aware of the child's confusion. Effort put into helping them gain a better understanding of their role in regard to the particular child placed with them, the meaning of the child's behavior, and their handling of it would seem highly desirable.

The Teachers' Perceptions of the Foster Children[16]

Although the relationship between sex and the social workers' ratings indicating degree of disturbance was not significant, the teachers report that the boys are more disturbing to other children both inside and outside the classroom, are more aggressive, and are poorly adjusted socially. Furthermore, the boys are more likely to work only under close supervision from the teacher, be unmotivated to do anything in school, and be easily distracted.

---

[16] See Appendix C, in which the findings from the Teacher Questionnaire are presented in greater detail.

Twenty-three percent of the children were reported by their teacher as being in a class for slow learners, and 42 percent were rated by their teachers (who had had all but one of these children in their class for at least eight months) as having below-average intellectual potential. Seventy-nine percent of the children reported on by their teachers had had intelligence tests, and their scores on these tests correlate .63 with the teachers' ratings of their ability. Those children whom the teachers feel cannot learn or who had low scores on their IQ tests are, according to the teachers, lacking in self confidence, shy and bashful, apathetic, easily depressed, and rigid in their ability to adjust to new situations.

The teacher's rating of academic potential is correlated .65 with her rating of the child's present academic performance. Looking at the distribution of the children, 59 percent of the children were rated by the teacher as below average in academic performance, while only 3 percent were doing above-average work. However, the teachers also say that 75 percent of the children have improved academically during the school year, and this improvement is correlated .40 with actual school performance, indicating that it is the children doing well in school at the end of the year who have shown improvement. These children who are doing poor school work are also the ones who have made the poorest social adjustment, have the fewest friends in class, are disturbing in the classroom both to the teacher and to the other students, and who are seen by their classmates as being different. Those children who are rated by the teacher as doing well academically are also rated as least disturbed on the total score of disturbance by the teacher, worker and mother.

The teachers reported that 70 percent of the children have several good friends in their class, while only 12 percent have no friends; and they also report that 68 percent of the children have made an average social adjustment. In addition to the relationships between the teacher's ratings of the children's academic functioning and social adjustment, which were pointed out above, these variables also correlate significantly with the social workers' ratings of how difficult the child is to have in a foster home, the direction indicating that those children who cannot get along in a family group also have trouble in getting along with their peers. Other significant correlations describe these children with poor peer relationships as being disturbing to the teacher and other students both inside the classroom and outside and as being seen as different by their classmates. Further, these children with poor social adjustment and few friends are given the highest ratings on the Schedules (indicating they are most disturbed) by the teacher, foster mother and worker.

When the items from the Teacher Questionnaire were factor analyzed, the rating of "social adjustment" came out with high loadings with "intellectual potential" and "academic performance." Such a finding gives weight to the assumption that the teacher is describing these children through a "schoolroom" perspective. But the relationship between these notions of how well the child is getting along with his classmates and how well he is doing with his schoolwork is not characteristic of the teacher only; the mother's rating of the child's academic performance correlates significantly with her rating of his peer relationships (r = .26) and the worker's ratings of these variables correlates even higher (r = .41) than the teacher's ratings (r = .37).

In the Round I interviews the social workers rated the degree to which the child's emotional needs interfere with his interacting with his peers. Although this variable is not significantly correlated with the teacher's ratings of the child's social adjustment or number of friends, it is significantly correlated with the teacher's ratings on the clusters of "aggressive" and "tense-anxious" and with the total score on the Teacher Questionnaire.

It was pointed out above that those children who are perceived as most difficult to have in a foster home are said to have the poorest social adjustment. In addition, they are perceived by the teacher as being the most disturbed and the most disturbing both inside of and outside of the classroom. They also have the most difficulty learning and are said to demand more attention from the teacher.

Some of the social workers and mothers mentioned that a foster child's feeling of conflict is often brought out in the school where other children question and even tease him because he is a foster child. The Round II rating of the degree to which a child's conflict influences his adjustment in the foster home is the only indicator of conflict that correlates with the total score on the Teacher Questionnaire (a degree of disturbance measure), but the workers' rating of conflict in Round I correlates significantly with other teacher ratings, indicating that those children with the greatest conflict are the most disturbing inside and out of the classroom and on the whole have made an inadequate social adjustment.

Chapter V

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOSTER FAMILIES

In order to understand many of the findings of this study, it is necessary to be familiar with the characteristics of the foster parents. Although these families may represent a cross-section of foster parents caring for "disturbed" children in Wisconsin under the care of the State Department of Public Welfare, they differ as a whole from the total population of parents who are caring for their own children of this age range. Our sample is truncated in that it consists in general of older parents with limited educational achievement, living mostly on farms and in small or middle-sized towns. Many grew up on a farm and more than half have lived on a farm during at least part of their adult life.

Looking at these characteristics more specifically, Table 13 shows how much older these foster parents are than most parents of children this age. Only 10 percent of the foster fathers and 11 percent of the foster mothers are less than thirty-five years old, while 26 percent of the fathers and 18 percent of the mothers are at least fifty-five years old. The average age for the total group is 49 for the fathers and 46 for the mothers.

In addition to the finding that the level of educational achievement of this sample is relatively low, this group is also unusual in that the mothers as a whole have attended school slightly longer. For example, 18 percent of the mothers attended at least a year of college, as compared with 7 percent of the fathers. Two of the mothers went on to graduate from college, but none of the fathers went beyond the second year. In spite of these slight differences at the top of the scale, the average number of years of schooling completed by the parents differs little (eleven for the mothers and ten for the fathers).

Another unique feature of this sample, and one which must be considered at various points of the analysis because of the related characteristics involved, is the high proportion of farmers. Thirty-six percent of the fathers were farmers, and another ten percent were described by the workers as doing some farming in addition to holding another job. The other fathers represented a variety of jobs, including craftsmen, truck or bus drivers, and proprietors, while ten percent were retired. It should

Table 13

Characteristics of the Foster Parents and Foster Family

Age	Foster Mother	Foster Father
25-34	11%	10%
35-44	33	22
45-54	38	42
55-64	17	21
65-70	1	5
	100%	100%
Education		
2-6 years	3%	5%
7-9 years	29	50
10-11 years	14	11
High school graduate	36	27
1-3 years of college	16	7
College graduate	2	0
	100% (N = 102)	100% (N = 96[a])

Occupation	Foster Families
Managers (except farm) proprietors, salesmen, and dairy farm owners	15%
Farmers (except dairy farmers)	39
Part-time farmers	10
Skilled workers: craftsmen, foremen, inspectors, and mechanics	12
Semi-skilled workers: drivers (truck), bus drivers, and factory workers	20
Unskilled workers: maintenance and sanitation workers	4
	100%
Number of Own or Adopted Children	
None	16%
One	19
Two	17
Three	30
Four-Five	15
Six-Seven	3
	100%
Number of Years as Foster Parents	
One year or less	12%
Two-four	22
Five-seven	23
Eight-eleven	20
Twelve-fifteen	10
Sixteen-twenty-two	13
	100%
Number of Foster Children Ever Cared For	
One	9%
Two-three	30
Four-five	29
Six-eight	15
Nine-twelve	10
Thirteen or more	7
	100%

[a] There were no foster fathers in six of these homes. Five fathers were not living (two had died during the interval between Round I and Round II), and in one home the foster mother was a spinster.

be noted that there were no professionals -- teachers, lawyers, doctors -- and no owners of large businesses.

In addition to the large proportion of farmers in this study, the farm influence in the lives of these foster parents is borne out again in the report made by 69 percent of the fathers and 49 percent of the mothers that their fathers had been farmers. And although only 46 percent of the foster fathers are involved in farming, 64 percent of the homes are said by the interviewers to be located in a rural setting.

Because of differences between farm and non-farm families in regard to the absolute value of money, the economic level of the parents in this study was determined by a rating made by the social worker in the Round II interviews. The worker was asked, "Considering the size of this family, how 'well-off' would you say this family is in terms of their level of income?" The answers were distributed as follows:

1.	Above average: income level is well above family's subsistence needs; could easily afford various luxuries.	14%
2.	Average. There is some income available above and beyond family's subsistence needs, but could afford only an occasional luxury.	55%
3.	Sufficient income to satisfy all of family's subsistence needs, but there is no surplus income.	22%
4.	Subsistence level income for this family; they just manage to break even, but sometimes are in debt or in want of certain necessities.	9%
5.	Below subsistence level for this family; they are frequently in debt or are usually not able to satisfy their subsistence needs.	--
		100%

When a check of the reliability of the social worker responses was made by a second administration of parts of the Round II interview, it was found that the workers could not distinguish reliably between the "above average" and "average" ratings, so that in the computation of correlation coefficients these two categories were combined.

The families these foster parents grew up in were large. Somewhat over half of the foster mothers came from families having five or more children, while over half of the foster fathers come from families with six or more children.

Looking at the foster parents' own natural families, we found that on the average they had fewer children than did their parents. Nineteen percent of the foster families in our study have had no natural children;

however, one-fourth of this group had adopted children and a few families with natural children had also adopted an additional child. Among those who have had children, the average was three natural children per family. There were only a very few families with six or seven children and none with more than seven children.

Of all the foster families:

14 percent had no natural or adopted children

19 percent had natural children who are grown and no longer at home

16 percent had at least one natural child 18 years or older living at home, but none under 18

14 percent had at least one natural child 18 years or older at home and at least one natural child under 18 at home

100%

There was a very wide range of foster care experience in this group of foster parents. A sizeable number (29 percent) had been foster parents for another agency before coming to the Division for Children and Youth with two families having each cared for as many as twenty children for another agency.

The mean length of time a family had been involved in foster care was seven and one-half years, and the median is six and one-half years. However, this study included five families who had been foster parents for only five months or less prior to the first interview, and one family which had been caring for foster children for twenty-four years. A relatively small number (only 11 percent) had been foster parents for less than two years, and an equally small number had been foster parents for fifteen years or more.

The total number of children cared for by these foster families is impressive. Counting all the children cared for in the past, as well as all the children currently being cared for in these foster homes at the time of the first interview, we reach a total of 767 foster children.

The following figures show that the large majority of the families had two or more foster children living in their homes at the time of the first interview of this study:

27 percent of families had one foster child in their home
33 percent had two foster children
22 percent had three foster children
10 percent had four foster children
8 percent had five or more foster children
100%

Social agencies are very interested in discovering how people hear about foster care programs and what motivates them to apply. When the foster mothers in this study were asked, "Can you recapture your thinking at the time and tell me why you were interested in being a foster parent?" they gave the answers indicated below. Many mothers mentioned more than one reason.

We wanted children but couldn't have any of our own, or thought we couldn't have any of our own, or wanted to try it out before adopting or couldn't adopt	29%
Our children had all grown up and left home or were nearly all grown up and we wanted children around	24%
We love children; we wanted to help children; we learned about some children who needed homes	39%
We knew people who were foster parents, or had had some experience caring for children of relatives or friends and thought we would like doing it	23%
We wanted a companion for our own child; we didn't want him to grow up as an only child	9%
We wanted a larger family; we grew up in a large family and wanted to have one	7%
We thought it might add to our income; we needed someone to help with the work	8%
We had a large house and plenty of space and thought we might as well use it	8%

As several mothers put it,

> "I always said that when I retired I wanted to devote my time to giving homes to children who had no homes...I had that 'inner feeling' to help handicapped children."
>
> "I guess because our kids were all in school and I wanted another baby -- I wanted a boy -- I thought it'd be fun to have a baby again."
>
> "With this first one, we thought we were never going to have children of our own."
>
> "Our youngest daughter always wanted us to have foster children, especially boys. After she left -- she was a noisy one -- the place was just dead and we had a whole year of solitude. Then we started thinking about foster children."

From the reasons given by the foster mothers, it appears that the desire to have children in the home was one of the principal reasons why people considered being foster parents. Nearly two-thirds of the mothers said this in one way or another.

It is very helpful to know what foster parents had expected foster care to be like before taking a child and whether or not their expectations had been correct. Although in this study such information had to be obtained by post facto questioning, especially difficult for those parents who had had children for several years, these ideas can be useful to agencies when they are training prospective foster parents. In answer to the question, "In what ways has being a foster parent been different from what you expected?" 28 percent of the fathers and 41 percent of the mothers said it had been about what they had expected. A higher percent of mothers than fathers felt that the experience had been harder than they had expected (32 percent, as compared with only 19 percent of the fathers). Perhaps the fact that more mothers than fathers found the job harder than expected merely reflects the fact that the burdens of child-rearing fall most heavily upon the mother, as she is the one who has primary responsibility for the child's everyday care.

If the foster parents could have learned more about the child prior to placement, the expectations might have come closer to matching the actual experience. The foster parents were asked:

> "Thinking about the time just before this child was placed here, would you say you had a very good idea of what he (she) was like, a fairly good idea, knew some things, knew very little, or knew nothing?"

Thirty-one percent of the mothers and 16 percent of the fathers said they had at least a fairly good idea, and 25 percent of the mothers and 39 percent of the fathers said they knew nothing. Almost one-fourth of the mothers said it would have been helpful to know about the child's emotional or behavior problems and 23 percent of the mothers said they wished they had known more about the child's previous background and experience. Less frequently mentioned traits the foster mother felt would have been helpful to know about were the child's school problems, personal habits, physical needs, social relationships, and relationships with his natural family. It appears quite clear from the replies given that the foster parents felt there was a considerable need for greater information about the children prior to placement. Many of the parents felt that they did not receive adequate preparation and thus had to learn "the hard way" about the problems the child had. The workers report that at the time of placement the agency did not know 9 percent of the children well enough to be able to prepare the parents and that they were unable to prepare the families for another 11 percent of the children for other reasons.

In addition to having the help of the agency, the foster mothers mentioned the helpfulness of getting support from other people. When the mothers were asked to indicate the degree of support or opposition they had felt from various people, none reported that their husbands had opposed them, and only 5 percent said their husbands had shown neutral attitudes. Thirteen percent of the mothers had felt opposition from family members other than their children and husbands, and 5 percent had felt some opposition from friends and neighbors.

When asked whether they had known and been influenced in their decision to take foster children by other foster parents, a little more than one-third of the foster mothers said they had not known of any other foster families at that time; however, of those who had known other families, nearly half felt they had been influenced by them. Some were definitely encouraged by these other families to undertake this new responsibility. Others said they had observed how satisfying it could be to have foster children, or how easy it could be, while others mentioned it had made them aware of what it could mean to the children, or even aware for the first time of the possibility of having foster children in their homes.

In some districts, the social agencies were able to provide classes or discussion groups for foster parents to help them in understanding the problems that arise in foster child care. From the reactions of parents who were able to attend these sessions, we found very favorable attitudes. Nearly 90 percent of the foster mothers said it had been helpful to them. Among the reasons they gave, the most frequent one was that they had learned more about how and why children behave the way they do. Some also said they had learned to understand or cope with problems they were actually having with their own foster children, while others said they had found considerable support and encouragement in these meetings. As two mothers put it,

> "At least you realize that you are not the only one with problems."
>
> "They helped us to see the improvement that can be made. They gave encouragement and discussed different ways of handling problems, but mostly it's the encouragement we got to continue with what seemed impossible."

The general idea indicated in the answers was that more training the social agencies could provide was desired, needed, and when provided, of great help.

In addition to the planned sessions with other foster parents, after becoming foster parents, it is very likely that a family will get to know other foster families and discuss problems and trade ideas on a more informal basis. Nine out of ten families in this study reported that they had come to know other foster parents after becoming foster parents themselves, and half of the foster mothers said they knew at least one other foster mother very well. Over one-third said they had found it "extremely helpful" to share ideas and talk with other foster mothers, and over one-half of all the foster mothers had found it at least "somewhat helpful." Only a very small group (10 percent) said they had not found it helpful, mainly because the other foster families had not had similar problems or because their methods "didn't work."

What kinds of satisfaction do foster parents report? In answer to an open-ended question we found that foster mothers and foster fathers mentioned the same kinds of satisfaction and referred most frequently to the improvements shown by the child than to anything else. They described in many different ways how satisfying it has been to see a child become happier, more self-confident, better able to learn in school, or more capable in general. Some expressed it this way:

> "The way she has taken to us; she tried so hard to please, and always wants to be near us."
>
> "He's come to look and act like a normal child; now he will smile and his eyes will shine."
>
> "I feel that--well, that I've won his confidence. At first there was no response whatsoever. Now he'd do anything for me--anytime--but at first he didn't respond."
>
> "She was such a sulking, stubborn child when we first got her and now she's so free and outgoing. It's been wonderful to watch."

When asked, "How would you feel now about starting all over again with a child just like this one was when he first came to you," only 8 percent of the mothers and 10 percent of the fathers said definitely that they would not do it again. Over half of the mothers and almost two-thirds of the fathers said without reservations that they would start over again. As one mother put it,

> "I'd be willing to start again. If we didn't have problems, there wouldn't be a challenge or a goal to work towards."

Chapter VI

THE DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT OF THE "SUCCESS" OF A FOSTER HOME

Statement of the Problem

As indicated in Chapter I, the problem of how to define the criterion measure used in evaluating foster homes is central to the entire study, for the nature of this definition determines to a large extent the kinds of information and "measures" to be gathered and interpreted. To the extent that it is limited or incomplete, so will be the findings.

There is no generally accepted answer to this problem, doubtless because it is so complex, and many different approaches may be taken.[17] Emphasis may be placed on the level of satisfaction of the foster parents with the child and with their interaction with him. Or, in the case of disturbed children, the mere fact of the continuation of the placement in the same home may be evidence of "success." Others may define "success" in terms of the child's "growth" or "improvement" in general or in regard to some specific problem behavior. Or emphasis may be placed on the interaction between foster parent and child, and the degree to which the relationship is satisfactory to both and contributes to "growth" in the child.

Basic to a number of these attempts at definition is the concept of "growth" or "improvement" in the child, and yet it is readily apparent that this is not one dimension but a construct made up of many dimensions including the child's potentials, his present developmental level, his needs, the effect of his prior experiences, and so on. An ideal approach would be the development of objective techniques for describing these various aspects of the child's development, so that changes in these characteristics over time could be assessed. Gil has suggested an approach such as this,[18] which could be utilized in evaluating the effects of foster care or any other intervening experience upon the child. However, the task is a tremendous one and remains to be done.

---

[17] Examples of some of these approaches are to be found in the following:
A. Kadushin, Adopted when older. Madison, Wisconsin. May, 1966. Mimeo.
Z. DeFries, S. Jenkins, and E. C. Williams, Disturbed children in foster home care: A realistic appraisal. White Plains, N.Y.: Westchester Children's Association. February, 1965. 43 p.
R. W. Colvin, Foster-parent attitudes related to placement success. Progress Report, May, 1963. Mimeo.

[18] D. G. Gil, Developing routine follow-up procedures for child welfare services. Child Welfare, 1964, 43, 229-240.

The Approach Taken in This Research

In the absence of such desirable methods as those suggested above it is to be expected that researchers will fall back on the social worker's judgment as a way of evaluating foster homes. Up to a point it can be argued that, because of the strategic administrative position of the social worker, it is his judgment of the "success" of a foster home that really counts, since it is the worker who makes the on-going decisions as to whether a placement would be continued or terminated. The use of this criterion, of course, implies the same administrative definition of "success" as that used by agencies, and is subject to all the contingencies under which agencies operate.

In our search for a provisional definition of "success" we found the one used by Fanshel least encumbered by implicit and/or untenable assumptions.[19] Fanshel included in it explicitly the goals of the placement which the worker has in mind, reasoning that these goals can vary greatly with the needs and problems of the particular child. The specific item used to obtain our initial measurement of foster parent's "success" is phrased as suggested by Fanshel:

> "With regard to the specific challenges presented by this child's situation and considering the goal set for the placement, what is your overall estimate of the way the foster mother and foster father are fulfilling their task?".

In order to facilitate the worker's response, the following alternatives were presented:

> "Would you say the foster mother is doing an excellent job, a good job, an adequate job, a somewhat less than adequate job, or a poor job?"

This question was asked separately for foster mothers and foster fathers in both the Round I and Round II interviews. A family unit "success" rating for each Round was constructed by summing the individual ratings given to each parent. The rating elicited by this question is referred to as a "global success rating," primarily because it is a general rating of the total performance of the foster parents.

---

[19] D. Fanshel, Studying the role performance of foster parents. Social Work, 1961, 74-81.

The Reliability and Stability of the "Success" Rating

Before examining the responses to this question and their implications for this study, it is first necessary to determine how reliable and stable these ratings are. To answer this question directly, a separate study of the reliability was made of the social workers' ratings given during the Round II interviews. A shortened version of the Round II schedule was repeated with each of 46 workers approximately four weeks after the original Round II interview.[20] From this analysis we determined that the reliability coefficient for the "success" rating given to foster mothers is .84 and for foster fathers it is .85. These figures indicate that in the rating of each parent at least 84 percent of the variance may be regarded as "true" or reliable variance.[21]

Further evidence as to the stability of the "success" rating over time may be seen in the degree of agreement between the ratings made at the time of the Round I interviews with those made at the time of the Round II interviews, a lapse of approximately seven months. Since actual changes in the performance of foster parents may well have occurred during this interval between interviews, (and we have clear evidence of some), the correlation coefficients between the two ratings may be regarded as a minimal estimate of their actual stability. For the foster mother ratings the inter-round correlation between ratings is .69, and for foster father ratings it is .69 (see Table 14). These coefficients, then, indicate that over an interval of seven months, at least two-thirds of the variance in the ratings may be regarded as "true" or reliable variance.

On the basis of these correlation coefficients one may conclude that even after a lapse of seven months, global "success" ratings provided by social workers are highly stable, and that we are justified in placing our confidence in them as a source of placement evaluation.

Since the global "success" ratings were to be used as the main dependent variable in this research, it seemed advisable to explore further the quality of these ratings, particularly as we were still left with one-third of the total variance that was not accounted for in the rating of one Round by the ratings from the other Round. Several possible explanations were considered: first, that some of this variation might be attributable to differences of opinion between social workers in cases where different workers were interviewed for the two rounds. To the extent that these workers differ in their evaluations of foster parents, our correlation coefficients reflect variations in social workers' perceptions and values rather than inconsistency of rating for the same worker over time. Since there were changes in the social workers supervising 39 percent of the foster home placements during this period of time, a comparison was possible between the ratings provided by the same worker at these two points in time and those provided by two different workers. These comparisons indicate that ratings made by the same workers show somewhat higher agreement than ratings made by different workers (see Table 14).

---

[20] See Appendix E, "An Investigation of the Reliability of Social Worker Responses."

[21] The reliability coefficient represents the proportion of variance that is reliable and does not need to be squared as does the correlation coefficient. See for example: Benjamin Fruchter. Introduction to factor analysis. New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc. 1954, 47.

The impact of these differences caused by changes of social workers between Rounds can be best demonstrated in Figure 1. This Figure suggests that there are no significant differences attributable to the change of workers. Most of the variation associated with change of worker in the correlation analysis of the ratings is related to certain points on the response scale used for this question. In particular, ratings of "excellent" or "good" made in one Round are agreed with over 50 percent of the time by ratings made in the other Round, and when changes do occur, they represent shifts in only one step on the five-point rating scale. Ratings of "adequate," "less than adequate," and "poor" generally show a higher proportion of shifts, especially between Rounds.

Our designation of the midpoint on the scale as "adequate" appears, on hindsight, to have been a somewhat unfortunate way of labeling this position, since "adequate" apparently has a variety of meanings to different workers, and does not denote clearly a midpoint between "excellent" and "poor." (Detailed data from the reliability study in fact indicate that most of the discrepancies in this rating involved the "adequate" position.)

One cannot assume, however, that a change in the rating over the seven-month interval is necessarily or primarily an indication of instability of the rating. A detailed examination of all information available on the nine placements for which the ratings of foster mothers changed by two or more positions on the response scale indicates the following:[22]

---

[22] A comparison of those mothers whose ratings improved from Round I to Round II with those whose ratings were lowered supports in general those findings concerning the total sample; that is, a larger percent of the mothers whose ratings improved in Round II had had at least ten years of schooling, are caring for the less disturbed children, and have had the foster child in their home more than three years. Because of the small number of ratings that changed, statistical tests regarding these differences are inappropriate.

Table 14

Correlations between Global Ratings of Success Given in Round I and Round II Interviews by Same and Different Social Workers

Success Ratings made in Round I interviews:	Success ratings made in Round II interviews: By same worker FM	FF	Family	By different worker FM	FF	Family	By all workers FM	FF	Family
By same worker:									
Of foster mother	73	58	67						
Of foster father	56	64	59						
Of family	70	65	69						
By different worker:									
Of foster mother				64	59	61			
Of foster father				68	72	72			
Of family				66	68	69			
By all the workers:									
Of foster mother							69	58	64
Of foster father							63	69	66
Of family							69	67	68
Number of children		69			44			113	
Number of foster homes		63			39			102	

NOTE: The correlation coefficients in this Table are based on 102 foster homes rather than 113 foster children, since the unit of analysis generally used is the home. In the 11 homes with two foster children the child selected to represent the home was always the more disturbed child. In 7 of these homes, the "success" rating was the same for both children.

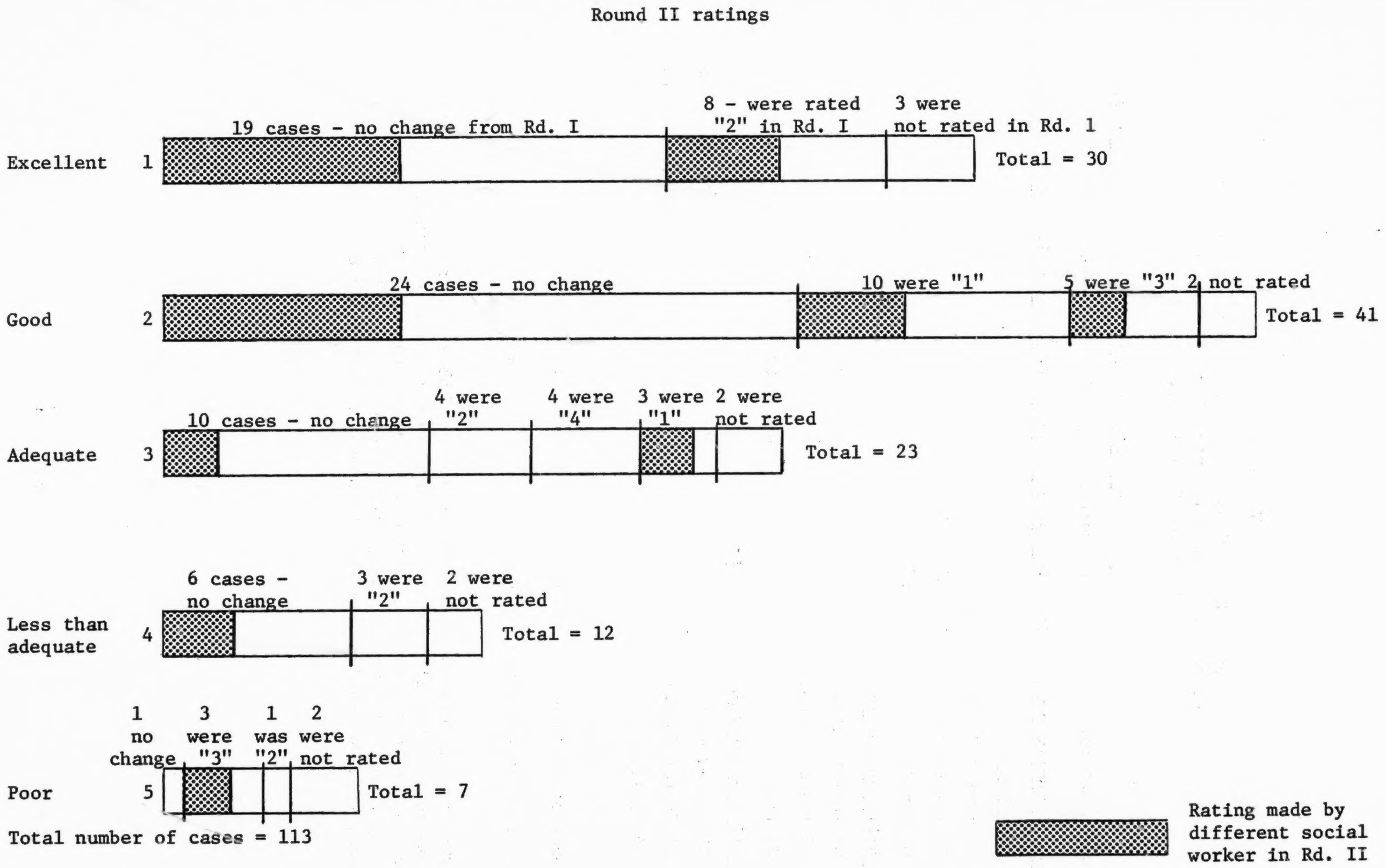

Fig. 1. Agreement between Round I and Round II "Success" Ratings of Foster Mothers

Five (representing children in three different homes) were made by different workers, both of whom said they knew the mothers at least "fairly well." No evidence was found to suggest any change in the situation or in the child which would account for the lower rating in four cases, and a higher rating in the remaining case.

One represented a change in the judgment of the same worker who indicated in the Round I interview that she knew the mother "fairly well," and in the Round II interview said she knew her "very well."

Three of these shifts appear to be due to actual changes in the placement situation:

One child was reported to have become worse because of the foster parents' continuing use of punitive behavior.

Another child was reported to have become upset over the change in worker, and foster mother was reported to lack understanding of this and handled the situation poorly.

Finally, one child had increased problems due to the placement of a natural brother in another foster home in the same school district: he was upset over the questions raised by other children, and the worker reported that the foster parents were too upset over this themselves to handle it well.

A more general question which may be raised in attempting to account for some of the residual unexplained variation in the global "success" ratings is the extent to which workers' ratings are influenced by the amount of contact they have had with the parents and the extent to which they know the parents. With respect to contact, that is, number and frequency of visits, there were no significant relationships. However, it must be remembered that the frequency of visits has a different meaning for the worker who has been supervising the family for a number of years and one who has taken over the supervision relatively recently. With respect to degree of familiarity, no significant relationships were found between the workers' reports of how well they know the parents and the "success" ratings for Round I, but significant relationships were found for the Round II ratings, particularly in regard to the foster father ratings (.24 for foster mother and .38 for foster father).[23] (A possible explanation for the absence of significant relationships in the Round I data is that new workers were supervising 11 of the placements and were unable to rate either the foster mother or foster father; and this may have had the effect of reducing the variance.)

---

[23] The term "significant" is used in the statistical sense in this report and means that the correlations reported could not be expected to occur by chance more than five times out of 100, (if at the .05 level) or more than once out of 100 times (if at the .01 level). Obviously practical "significance" is another matter and we would not always argue that every one of these small but statistically significant correlations has practical significance. However, we present them in order to give as complete a picture as possible of our data.

A different aspect of the relationship of the foster parent to the worker is the worker's rating of the productivity of the casework relationship with the foster mother. This rating is significantly correlated with the worker's evaluation of how well the foster mother is known, as would be expected (.36), but when degree of familiarity is held constant (through partial correlation), the correlation between productivity of the casework relationship and success changes very little. Hence this dimension is included as a separate item in the later analysis of predictors to success, quite apart from degree of familiarity.

These findings for the Round II data suggest that workers reserve the rating of "excellent" for those homes which they feel they know well, and are more likely to give less committal ratings ("good" or "adequate") to those homes with which they are not so familiar.

In general, we have greater confidence in the ratings given to the foster mothers, not only because of the lower association with worker's familiarity, but also because the ratings were explained by the social workers with considerably more specific information than were those of the foster fathers. However, the ratings of foster mother and foster father correlate very highly (.83 for Round I and .86 for Round II), and since a family "success" rating is logically the rating which one wants to predict, most of the findings will be presented as related to the family "success" rating from Round II. This later rating is used rather than an average of the two because it takes into account the changes occurring since Round I and represents the "current status" of these homes.

The Meaning and Validity of the Global "Success" Ratings

Once the relative stability of this measure has been demonstrated, a still more basic question is what does this rating actually measure? On what is it based? These and related questions must be answered before it is reasonable to attempt to predict these ratings.

Several different kinds of measures were obtained in the present research which can shed considerable light on this problem. For purposes of simplicity in presentation, this problem may be expressed in two different questions: first, does the global "success" rating mean what we expect it to mean? Second, what are the component parts which comprise these ratings?

The first question is essentially one of the construct validity of the global "success" ratings. Operationally, this question is answered by answering the following question: How well do the global "success" ratings correlate with other cognate ratings which, according to the conceptual meaning of "success," should be highly intercorrelated with it? The answer to this latter question depends of course in part upon one's selection of cognate measures. Our selection of these measures was determined mainly by previous descriptions of "successful" foster homes, and by insights contributed by various consultants during early stages of the research. Undoubtedly other measures could be used.

Specifically, if foster parents are really "successful," then we would also expect them to show warmth toward the foster child, and we would expect the workers to perceive "successful" foster parents as being secure rather than insecure in their parental roles, as being able to provide children with consistent discipline rather than confusing a child with contradictory expectations, and as being able and willing to adapt their standards of expected behavior to the particular needs and disposition of the children in their care. As would be expected even on the basis of common sense, high positive correlations between all of these measures and global "success" ratings were in fact obtained (see Table 15). Still further evidence of the validity of the global ratings was obtained at the time of the Round I interviews through a more specific kind of rating. Workers were asked to indicate how important were the following three needs for the particular child whose placement was being discussed: (a) need for a substitute family; (b) need for help in relating to other people; (c) need for a clearer identity. Following this, workers were also asked the following question:

> "Also, I'd like your evaluation of the extent to which the foster home is succeeding in meeting each of them -- whether you think the foster home is doing very well, fairly well, poorly, very poorly, or if you are not sure."

Since most social workers reported that these needs were very important for most of the children, the average rating given by the worker in evaluating how well the foster home was meeting these three needs was computed. This evaluation correlates positively and strongly with the global "success" ratings (.54) (see Table 15).

The image of the "successful" foster home which emerges out of this analysis from the point of view of the social workers is one of parents who are generally well suited to the foster child in their care, who in fact meet their child's specific needs, who are able to provide consistent discipline,

Table 15
Correlation Coefficients Between Social Workers' Ratings of Success and Their More Specific Evaluations of Foster Parents

	Social Workers' Ratings of Success					
Round I	Foster Mother I	Foster Mother II	Foster Father I	Foster Father II	Foster Family I	Foster Family II
How well home meets child's needs	72	54	70	49	75	54
How suitable is home for child	72	63	76	60	76	65
Foster mother consistency	54	50	52	47	56	49
Foster father consistency	44	38	49	23	49	33
To what extent does foster mother adapt standards to child	65	57	59	59	65	60
To what extent does foster father adapt standards to child	32	35	44	42	39	40
How secure is foster mother in maternal role	50	44	38	39	47	43
How secure is foster father in paternal role	40	37	54	44	50	42
Foster mother warmth	59	39	39	31	54	35
Foster father warmth	36	36	58	45	49	42
Productiveness of casework relationship	54	41	55	43	57	42
How strict are the foster parents	03	-04	00	-05	01	-04
Round II						
Foster parents' skill in handling major problems	57	74	45	65	55	73
Foster mother tolerance	39	32	30	27	38	31
Foster father tolerance	-14	05	03	13	-06	10
Foster mother warmth	28	47	27	41	27	43
Foster father warmth	16	42	36	54	25	49
Foster mother sure in relating to children	33	42	29	44	31	40
Foster father sure in relating to children	30	31	16	29	25	31
Foster mother takes child's needs into account when handling him	44	72	31	55	39	67
Foster father takes child's needs into account when handling him	33	57	35	64	36	63
Foster parents' contribution to child's improvement	10	38	17	42	13	40
Degree of confidence shown by foster parents in handling of major problems	27	27	22	35	27	24
How firm are the foster parents in enforcing their expectations?	11	16	24	20	17	17

$r_{05} = .195$

$r_{01} = .254$

but who at the same time are sufficiently flexible in their expectations for the child's behavior, and who are themselves persons who feel confident of their roles as parents. On the basis of this analysis we can conclude that in terms of the theoretical and common-sense meanings of the concept of "successful" foster parents, the global ratings appear to be highly valid measures. We cannot be sure, however, that the consistently high correlations we have found between the global "success" ratings and the various cognate measures are not, to some unknown extent, artifacts reflecting in answers to various questions the same general impression workers form of foster parents. To what extent have these various ratings been made independently of each other? This question can be answered to some extent by the statistical technique of partialing out the amount of the variance in the global rating which is contributed by each of these cognate measures. If they are indeed reflections of the same general impression, a combination of them would not be expected to explain much more of the variance than any one of them taken alone. But before proceeding with this kind of analysis, we will first address ourselves to the other prong of the general question regarding the validity of the global rating, that is, what are its component parts.

An Attempt to Develop Operational Measures of "Success"

At the time of the construction of the Round II interview schedules, we were particularly interested in devising alternative ways of viewing the "success" of a foster home which would be operationally more specific than the global ratings, but which could also be obtained from the social workers. These alternative approaches were the following:

1. Change in a child's behavior in the desired direction. One of the major goals of foster care, particularly of "disturbed" children, is that the children change their attitudes and behavior in certain ways. In the absence of a satisfactory conceptual framework within which to evaluate such changes, we thought it desirable at least to explore the possibility of obtaining information on specific behavioral changes in the children in this study. It was recognized that a period of six or seven months is a relatively short period of time in which to study such changes, but there seemed to be sufficient promise in the approach methodologically to justify trying it out.

In the Round II interview, the caseworker was asked to list the child's major problems (up to five of them), describe the ways in which he would want to see the child change, and then was asked in a detailed series of questions about each of these major problems (a) whether the child had shown any change in this behavior since last summer (the time of the Round I interviews), (b) the direction of the change, (c) the extent of the change, and (d) the specific factors to which the worker might attribute the change. If the foster parents were not mentioned in response to the last item, a specific question regarding their possible part in the change was asked. All of the information obtained through this series of rather tedious questions was coded and reduced to a summary code indicating the degree and direction of improvement attributed to the foster parents.

Before presenting the results of this approach it should be pointed out that we consider the measures described above to be only very rough estimations of improvement, partly because of the summary nature of the measure, but more basically because of the limitations imposed by lack of valid knowledge as to the relative importance of specific changes in a child's behavior. It should not be overlooked that even slight improvement in what might be regarded as a basic problem of personality and development might actually represent a more profound change than our crude measures of improvement might suggest.

Following this detailed series of questions for each major problem mentioned, the caseworker was asked whether the child had changed in other ways since the previous summer. If the worker reported other changes, the same battery of detailed questions as to direction, magnitude, and source were repeated for each change. Data from these last questions were combined with the summary code built for the set of major problems to create an overall estimate of the degree of change which the social workers attribute specifically to the foster parents.

The correlation of this rating of "change in desired directions attributed to the foster parents" with the global "success" ratings (Round II) is .35. Thus, with all its limitations -- the crudeness of the measure in representing improvement in the child's behavior and in estimating the foster parents' contribution to this improvement, as well as the limitations of the time period covered -- the results suggest that this approach can be profitably pursued as a specific way of defining and measuring "success."

2. Skill in handling the child's major problems. A further alternative approach which is considerably simpler is to define "success" in terms of the foster parents' skill or ability in handling the foster child's major problems, again as judged from the point of view of the social workers. Accordingly, for each major problem mentioned in the Round II interviews, the caseworker was asked to evaluate how well the foster parents were handling

it. The numerical average of these ratings was used as a summary index, thus making it possible to compare parents for whom the workers mentioned only one major problem with those for whom workers described four or five major problems.

The index of foster parent problem-handling skill correlates .73 with the Round II global family "success" rating; over half of the variance in the global "success" rating is thus the foster parents' specific problem-handling ability. Since this rating was obtained during a long and tedious series of questions about each major problem, there may be some justification in placing more confidence in it as an independent assessment of the foster parents' care than in other more global ratings. However, we must also be aware that nearly half of the variation in the problem-handling index is left unexplained by the global "success" ratings, and vice-versa. Global "success" and problem-handling ability are by no means interchangeable: one variable includes elements not shared with the other. Problem-handling skill in itself, however, could serve as a separate criterion measure if we wished to attempt to predict it alone. This will be done in later analysis. For the present, we will continue in the direction of attempting to understand the components of the global "success" rating.

3. Degree of confidence shown by foster parents in handling foster child. This is another aspect of the specific behavior of the foster parents which was studied in detail at the time of the Round II interview, not as an indication of success, but as a possible component of problem-handling skill. Regarding each major problem, the worker was asked the following question after indicating which parent (or both) handled the problem and the way in which it was being handled:

> "How sure of (herself, himself, themselves) do you think __________ is (are) in handling this problem? Would you say extremely sure, quite sure, fairly sure, rather unsure, or very unsure?"

Since this five-point scale did not prove to be reliable, it was reduced to a dichotomy, which shows a small although significant relationship with the global "success" rating (r = .24). It appears that the social workers' perception of the degree of confidence on the part of the foster parent is not an important aspect of their "success" rating.

Relationship of the Child's "Degree of Disturbance" to the Ratings of "Success"

Since a considerable range of behavior is represented in the children included in this study, it is important to look for any possible relationship between the degree of difficulty which the child presents in the home and the "success" ratings. A relatively low but significant negative relationship was found, suggesting that the homes caring for the more difficult children are rated somewhat lower than those caring for the least difficult children (see Table 16). From one point of view this is not at all surprising; it is doubtless easier for foster parents to do an "excellent" job if they do not have extreme problem behavior to contend with. On the other hand, there is no significant relationship between the social workers' ratings of "skill in problem-handling" and "degree of disturbance," suggesting the possibility that the global rating may be more influenced by the "goals of the placement" the worker has in mind and reflects the worker's lack of satisfaction with the progress the foster parents have made, whereas the rating of problem-handling skill reflects the worker's more specific evaluation of the parents' coping with the difficult behavior. Further study of the kinds of reasons given by the workers for their ratings may throw some light on these differences.

Table 16

The Relationship between the Child's Degree of Disturbance and the Social Workers' Evaluation of the Foster Parents' Success

Social Worker's Evaluation of Success	Child's Degree of Disturbance N=102	Child's Degree of Disturbance N=113
Foster Mother I	-.23	-.21
Foster Mother II	-.26	-.28
Foster Father I	-.16	-.16
Foster Father II	-.17	-.20
Foster Family I	-.24	-.21
Foster Family II	-.23	-.27
Foster Parents' skill in handling major problems	-.17	-.18
	$r_{05} = .195$	$r_{05} = .184$
	$r_{01} = .254$	$r_{01} = .243$

Parenthetically, the occurrence of this relationship between the rating of "success" and the child's "degree of disturbance" suggests even more strongly the need for a conceptual scheme for evaluating the child's strengths and weaknesses or the "potential for change" and the "changes" in a child's behavior.

In the meantime, however, a decision had to be made regarding this relationship and its effect on other data analysis. We are concerned with attempting to predict foster parents who will be "successful" in caring for difficult children, and we find that the more difficult the child, the less likely (to a relatively slight extent) the foster parents are to succeed. However, although we have considered the possibility of dropping the children who were "least disturbed" from the sample, there was no group of children who on the basis of the varied evidence we had actually seemed "not disturbed." Some of those with relatively low scores on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule were rated as "highly disturbed" on the basis of the interviews, and those few for whom the social worker described no major problems had problems described by the foster mothers. Only two children with relatively low scores on the Schedule were said by both social workers and foster mothers to have no major problems; one was subsequently dropped from the sample for other reasons but the other was kept.

The Contribution of These Various Ratings to the Global "Success" Rating

We are now ready to examine the contribution of the component parts of the global success rating. By the technique of multiple and partial correlation, we can make successive attempts to isolate components of the total variance in the global ratings. The greater the proportion of variance in this overall rating which we are able to explain, the better its meaning will be understood.

First, let us examine how each of the component variables correlates with the global success rating. In Table 17 these items are grouped logically in more specific and more general dimensions.

Up to this point in our analysis of the meaning of the global "success" ratings provided by social workers we have accumulated three intriguing problems which can be answered by a multiple regression analysis. First is the skeptical question, to what extent are the cognate measures of success discussed earlier simply generalized reflections of the global "success" rating; how independent are the cognate measures? This question can be answered empirically by observing the magnitudes of successive increments in the proportion of variance accounted for upon the addition of each cognate measure

Table 17

Correlations between Various Evaluations of the Foster Parents and the Family Success Rating, Round II

	Correlation with Family Success II
Ratings of foster parents' skill and ability in handling specific problems	
Foster parents' skill in handling major problems (II)[a]	.73
Foster parents' contribution to improvement in child's behavior (II)	.40
Degree of confidence shown by foster parents in handling major problems (II)	.24
Ratings of more general aspects of foster parents' behavior	
How well foster home is meeting the child's needs (I)	.54
General personality: Warmth of foster parents (II)	.51
Degree of confidence as parents:	
How secure are foster parents in respective roles?[b] (I)	.42
How sure is each foster parent in relating to children (II)	.44
Ratings of adaptability or flexibility of foster parents:	
To what extent do foster parents adapt standards to child? (I)	.37
How tolerant is foster mother of deviations from her expectations? (II)	.31
To what extent do foster parents take child's needs into account in handling him? (II)	.68
Ratings of the disciplinary style of foster parents:	
How strict are the foster parents? (I)	-.04
How consistent are the foster parents? (I)	.37
How firm are the foster parents in enforcing their expectations? (II)	.17
Rating of the productivity of the casework relationship with the foster mother (I)	.42
Ratings of degree of contact and familiarity of social worker with foster parents	
How well worker knows foster mother (II)	.24
How well worker knows foster father (II)	.38
Degree of disturbance shown by the child (I)	-.26

---

[a] The source of each rating--whether Round I or Round II--is shown. It is questionable whether, on the one hand, we are justified in combining information from both rounds, particularly when 39 percent of the assessments were made by different social workers. However, if the ratings of these various characteristics of the foster parents have validity, their source--whether made by one worker or another--is not of such import. The one rating which reflects the relationship with a particular worker is that of "the productivity of the casework relationship," made by the Round I worker. Evidence that this rating reflects other characteristics of the foster mother which are regarded as desirable in a foster parent is presented in Chapter VII. For these reasons it is included here.

[b] In Table 15 are shown the correlations of separate ratings of foster mother and foster father with the "success" ratings. These separate ratings were combined (summed) to give the rating of foster parents which is shown here as correlated with the family success rating II.

over and above what is already accounted for by other variables. The larger each increment, the more independent is each cognate measure of the global rating. The second problem for which the multiple regression analysis is eminently suited is to determine what the global "success" rating is made up of; what are its component parts? The square of the multiple correlation coefficient at successive steps will show how much variance in the total global ratings is accounted for by each of the supposed components. Our goal is to account for as much of the variance in the global ratings as possible by adding as few component variables as possible. Finally, the third problem which is soluble with the multiple regression technique is to determine the extent to which the global "success" ratings are being influenced by factors which we consider extraneous. Specifically, we want to know what the explanatory power of "degree of familiarity" and "degree of disturbance" is after we have allowed the other variables to explain as much of the variance in the global ratings as they can.

For these purposes a computer program for stepwise regression was used. This program (BMDO2R) yields a multiple correlation through a series of multiple linear regression equations, at each step adding the variable which makes the greatest reduction in the unexplained variance. Thus it provides us with successive multiple correlations of a series of "independent" variables (the various ratings) with the "dependent" variable, or the global success rating -- the rating which we want to understand and explain insofar as these other ratings can explain its component parts. It is possible in this program to specify the order in which one wishes some or all of the variables to be entered. We were interested in knowing how much of the variance in the Round II global success rating could be explained after the foster parents' problem-handling ability was taken into account, so this variable was entered first. We wanted to look last at the effect of the workers' degree of familiarity with the foster parents and also the effect of the child's degree of disturbance, to see if these relatively extraneous items would increase the multiple correlation after the various ratings of the foster parents had been included.

In Table 18 the relative contribution of these various ratings to the global success rating is indicated. When all are used, 75 percent of the total variance in the rating can be explained. The major part of the variance in the success rating is explained by the foster parents' problem-handling skill (54 percent), followed, to a much lesser extent, by their ability to

Table 18

Results Obtained When Various Components of the Family Success Rating Are Combined in a Multiple Regression

Step Number	Variable Name	Multiple R	Multiple R^2	Percent of Variance Explained by Each Variable When Added
1	Foster parents' skill in handling major problems	.7333	.5378	53.78%
2	Foster parents consider child's needs when handling him	.7831	.6133	07.55
3	Foster parents' consistency	.8116	.6586	04.54
4	Foster parents' firmness in enforcing expectations	.8217	.6751	01.65
5	Foster parents' sureness in relating to children	.8302	.6893	01.41
6	Foster parents' adaptation of standards to child	.8403	.7061	01.69
7	Foster parents' warmth	.8446	.7134	00.73
8	Foster parents' security in parental roles	.8488	.7205	00.71
9	Foster parents' strictness	.8510	.7242	00.37
10	Productiveness of casework relationship	.8524	.7266	00.24
11	Foster parents' confidence in handling major problems	.8531	.7277	00.11
12	Foster mother tolerance	.8534	.7283	00.06
13	Foster parents' contribution to improvement in child's behavior	.8535	.7284	00.01
14	How well foster home meets child's needs	.8535	.7285	00.00
15	How well worker knows foster father	.8613	.7418	01.33
16	How well worker knows foster mother	.8658	.7496	00.78
17	Child's degree of disturbance	.8670	.7516	00.20

take the child's needs into account when handling him (8 percent), their consistency (4 percent) their firmness in enforcing expectations (2 percent), and so on. The multiple correlation of .84 at step 6 and even .87 at step 17 is statistically significant at the .001 level, indicating that there is less than one chance in one thousand that a correlation of this size could have occurred by chance.[24]

One other way of looking at statistical significance is to examine the increase in variance which is explained by each variable as it is added. After step 6 (with only one exception) the amount of additional variance explained by each variable in turn does not increase significantly, indicating that the information contained in these later variables is already included in the earlier variables. The one exception is the worker's rating of how well the foster father is known, which was one of the three variables purposely entered last in the regression. This variable does make a small but significant increase (.05 level) in the amount of variance explained, indicating that it is contributing a different kind of information to the "success" rating than the other variables. In view of the range in this variable, with some fathers being known "very well" by the workers and others "not at all," this is not surprising as it is hardly to be expected that a worker who has never met a foster father would rate him as doing an "excellent" job. However, the other two variables which were also purposely entered last--how well the worker knows the foster mother and the child's degree of disturbance--do not add significantly to the percent of the variance which is accounted for.

The findings of this stepwise regression enable us to answer the questions posed earlier. First, it appears that the cognate ratings of the more general aspects of the foster parents' behavior, as shown in Table 17, contribute relatively little to the global success rating except for the rating of the parents' ability to take the child's needs into account--a rating

---

[24] The formula for the F-ratio (which provides a test of whether such a correlation could occur by chance) is:

$$F = \left[\frac{R^2}{1 - R^2}\right] \left[\frac{N - k}{k - 1}\right]$$

(in which k = the number of variables.)

which also pertains to the foster parents' handling of their particular foster child. There is very little evidence that these other cognate measures are independent assessments of the foster parents; they may indeed be generalized reflections of the same evaluation reflected in the worker's global "success" rating. One word of caution should be included here, however. It should not be assumed that this finding means the characteristics of foster parents represented in these separate ratings are of no importance. It simply means that the rating of the problem-handling skill is such an important rating that it apparently takes into account many of the other dimensions which have also been rated.

One way to test this further is to omit the rating of problem-handling skill from the stepwise regression. When this is done, the rating of the foster parents' ability to consider the child's needs explains nearly half the total variance (45 percent) in the "success" rating, followed by the rating of the parents' consistency (8 percent), and then by the other variables in slightly different order (see Table 19). A somewhat larger number of variables contribute significant, although small, increases in the multiple correlation, which does not reach quite so high a level as in the previous multiple regression. Even when problem-handling skill is omitted, then, the conclusion to be drawn from the multiple regression analysis is much the same--that there is very great overlap between these ratings of the foster parents and that a few of them account for most of the explained variance in the "success" rating.

The second question posed earlier concerned the components of the "success" rating. There is clear evidence that the major part of the "success" rating may be thought of as made up of the foster parents' problem-handling skill and their ability to take the child's needs into account. This defines "success" of the foster parents in terms of fairly specific interaction with the foster child. In addition, however, there is evidence from both of these multiple regressions that the foster parents' consistency and firmness in handling the child, and their relative sureness in relating to children are significant parts of the "success" rating. These and related findings will be of use in suggesting further approaches to the study of "success."

Our confidence in the global success rating as the criterion variable is strengthened by this fairly extensive analysis, in which a large part of the variance in the rating is explained.

Table 19

Results Obtained When Various Components of the Family Success Rating Are Combined in a Multiple Regression Omitting the Foster Parents' Problem Handling Skill

Step Number	Variable Name	Multiple R	Multiple R^2	Percent of Variance Explained by Each Variable When Added
1	Foster parents consider child's needs when handling him	.6702	.4491	44.91%
2	Foster parents' consistency	.7298	.5327	08.35
3	Foster parents' sureness in relating to children	.7554	.5705	03.80
4	Foster parents' adaptation of standards to child	.7718	.5956	02.50
5	Foster parents' firmness in enforcing expectations	.7811	.6102	01.46
6	Foster parents' warmth	.7926	.6282	01.80
7	Foster parents' security in parental roles	.8029	.6447	01.65
8	Foster mother's tolerance	.8088	.6541	00.94
9	Productiveness of casework relationship	.8098	.6558	00.17
10	Foster parents' strictness	.8108	.6574	00.17
11	How well foster home is meeting child's needs	.8109	.6575	00.01

Next Steps In the Definition and Measurement of "Success"

In this chapter we have considered in detail two different approaches to the problem of defining and measuring "success." While we think the alternative approaches developed in this research extend existing knowledge in this field, we also feel that much further work is required. For example, each of the approaches we have described in this report relies entirely on the existence of social workers who are sufficiently familiar with each family to give reliable ratings and reports. For a variety of obvious practical reasons, there is a great need for ways of measuring "success" which do not depend completely on the existence, good will, familiarity, or reliability of social workers. Such is the task of future investigation. It can be approached from many points of view.

Before becoming involved in specific details, however, we would suggest that serious consideration be given to more fundamental theoretical and conceptual issues involved in this problem. We need to determine the main parameters of this concept of "success." For example, first there is the temporal dimension: should "success" be viewed from the short-run or the long-run perspective? Would measures of long- and short-run change correlate highly? Second is the issue of the presence vs. absence of characteristics which can be counted as indicative of "success." Social workers, clinical psychologists, and others carry with them certain normative models of what the foster child's personality and development should be. These models include both symptoms and signs of excesses in certain traits, as well as deficits in others. We need to work toward a conception of personality development which permits ratings regarding the stages of development and of traits characteristic thereof as well as of the potentials for development. A third parameter involves the very semantics of "success." Generically, "success" refers to some desired result, object, or outcome. This definition implies the existence of goals or desired states, and it also implies the existence of an agent who establishes and seeks the attainment of these goals and states. No definition of "success" can be meaningful unless the source or agent of the evaluative criteria is specified, because when the source changes, so do the standards of evaluation change. In thinking about the "success" of foster homes we must always ask, "Whose goals?" Is it possible to reach general agreement as to the goals of a given foster home placement?

Finally, another parameter of "success" is clearly the object of this concept. Are we to be primarily concerned with the "success" of the foster parents or of the foster child? Is the "success" of one always to be defined in terms of the "success" of the other? From the point of view of the management and administration of social services and foster home placements, one would focus primarily on the "success" of the parents. But, from the point of view of the long-term goal of all these services, is it not the child himself? These and other parameters of "success" need to be explored before we can expect significant advances in our understanding of foster home placements.

Chapter VII

AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CASEWORK PROCESS TO "SUCCESS"

One of the initial goals of this study was to collect systematic data which would throw light upon the casework process as one of the possible contributing factors to the "success" or continuation of a placement. It was recognized that the contribution of the worker to maintaining a placement would need to be carefully studied if any attempt were to be made to evaluate it. Consequently in the initial objectives ways in which data would be collected toward this end were explicitly stated. In the Round I interviews the foster mother, foster father, and social worker were each asked a battery of questions about the familiarity of the worker with the parents and vice versa, about the way in which each would describe the role of the other, the frequency of contact, attitudes toward the contact and an evaluation of the relationship. Further, a fairly intensive effort was made to obtain ongoing data regarding the caseworker's contact with each foster home during the entire interval between the two rounds of data collection, through asking the worker to send in a report form regarding each visit to the foster home, and then carefully checking the entire record during the Round II interview.

However, along with this collection of data, we have acquired a considerably better understanding of the complexity of such an attempted evaluation. It is clear that no study -- however detailed -- of the casework process during a relative limited period of seven or eight months can possibly describe the kind of caseworker "input" which has gone into working with a foster family which has been involved in foster care for a considerable number of years. The families in this study have been serving as foster families on the average of seven and one-half years, although a few (5 families) had become foster parents for the first time within the previous five months. It now seems clear to us that any study of the casework relationship must start at the beginning of such a relationship and follow it carefully. For example, it is clear that in some cases the caseworker who has been supervising the foster family for a number of years has already established a certain relationship with the family and during the period covered by this study has simply put a minimum effort into maintaining this relationship.

Another complicating factor has been that the foster children in this study had been in their placement for varying lengths of time; a few had been in the homes since infancy and thought of this as their only home, whereas others had been in the foster homes only for a few weeks at the time of the Round I interview and had been separated from their natural families for only a year. Some children had been supervised by the same worker even in a previous placement, while others had been supervised by several caseworkers in the present placement.

Furthermore, the extent of turnover in caseworkers during the interval between Round I and Round II was much greater than initially anticipated and must be taken into account in any attempt to describe the caseworker's role even during the relatively brief period of time covered by this study. Of the homes studied at the time of Round II interviews, 38 percent were being supervised by a different caseworker than at the time of Round I. All of these, as far as we know, represented a transfer of cases caused by a worker's leaving the agency. Such professional mobility must be taken into account in any research design.

With such limitations in mind, we present the following discussion more as an example of the kinds of relationships which it was hoped that our data would throw light on rather than as findings in and of themselves.

One of the questions basic to an understanding of the success rating is whether there is a significant relationship between how well the worker reports that she knows the foster parents and the level of the success rating. In general, the workers report that they know the foster mothers considerably better than they feel they know the foster fathers; in the Round I interviews the workers report knowing 74 percent of the mothers and 44 percent of the fathers at least fairly well. By the time of the Round II interviews, a larger proportion of both foster fathers and foster mothers are described as being known fairly well or very well (56 percent and 89 percent respectively), and only 11 percent (of the foster mothers) are described as being known only slightly. The worker's reported degree of familiarity with the foster mother is not significantly related to the rating of "success" in Round I (r = .10), but in Round II a small but significant relationship appears between the extent to which the caseworker feels she knows the foster mother and the success rating (r = .24). When the sample is divided into those families who were still being supervised by the same worker in Round II as in Round I and those being supervised by different workers, the correlation is significant only for the different workers at the .05 level. The relationship between familiarity and "success" is slightly stronger for the foster father: .18 in Round I and .38 in Round II. This is not surprising and is reflected mainly in the reluctance of the worker to give extreme ratings on the "success" scale (either "excellent" or "poor") to any foster parent who is not known well.

It seems quite likely, however, that this small relationship between how well the foster mother is known by the worker and the success rating given by the worker may be related to a generalized attitude toward and willingness to work with the agency on the part of the foster mother, possibly enabling the worker to get to know them better. This is reflected in the workers' ratings of several dimensions of the foster mother's attitude. For example, there is a highly significant relationship between the workers' ratings of the productiveness of their relationship and of the foster parents' success made in the Round I interview (r = .57), the most successful parents being the ones with whom the workers feel they have the most productive relationship. These parents with whom the workers feel they have the most productive relationship are also the ones with whom they report being most familiar (r = .36 for the foster mother and .42 for the foster father), and have had the greatest number of visits and casework interviews.

Those mothers who are perceived by the worker as those with whom they have the most productive relationship are also those who are perceived as most willing to discuss the problems they have with the foster child (r = .66) and as most willing to have the worker talk alone with the foster child (.30). The mothers who are rated as most willing to discuss the problems of the foster child with the worker are also rated as the most successful (r = .54), as known the best by the worker (r = .33), as visited most often (r = .27), and interviewed the most often (r = .25).

Furthermore, there is a relationship between the social workers' rating of the success of the foster mother and their perception of the foster mother as accepting of their talking alone with the child (r = .40), but this relationship does not hold between the foster mother's report of her own acceptance of this and the rating of her success by the worker. There are significant relationships between the mothers' report of having discussed problems regarding the foster child with the worker and their appraisal of how well they feel the workers know them (r = .48), suggesting that discussing their problems with the worker is partly a function of how well they feel they know the worker. Those mothers who report that they find these discussions most helpful are the ones who feel that the workers know them well (r = .30), encourage them (r = .48), and never make them feel uncomfortable (r = .29). It appears that the foster mother's report of whether she ever feels uncomfortable with the social worker is significantly related to her perception of whether she receives encouragement from the worker (r = .51). The same relationship, although to a lesser degree, exists for the foster fathers (r = .28). This attitude toward the worker is also significantly related to the success rating (r = .28), suggesting that it is the mothers who are given the lowest success ratings who are most likely to feel uncomfortable with the worker. Further evidence along these lines is to be found in the report given by the foster mothers regarding the social worker's talking alone with the foster child; those mothers who express complete willingness for the worker to talk alone with the child are somewhat more likely to report that discussions with the worker are helpful (r = .22) and to be regarded by the worker as having somewhat more productive relationships (r = .20). One could speculate regarding the reasons for these small but significant relationships, but an understanding of the factors accounting for them would require a detailed study of the entire casework relationship.

A further question is whether there is a relationship between the length of time the worker has supervised the placement, the number of visits made, and the number of casework interviews with the worker's rating of the success of the placement. There is no relationship between total length of supervision and the success rating.

The number of visits made to the home is not related to success in these data, but it must be remembered that the social workers who have been supervising these homes for a year or more may have visited more frequently at some earlier stage in the supervision than in the period covered by this study. Furthermore, we found that the new workers, those who took over supervision between Round I and Round II, tended to visit several times to become acquainted with the foster family, so that the frequency of their visits would not necessarily represent accurately "casework contact."

There is a significant although small relationship indicating that the social workers are visiting most often those homes in which the children are rated as most disturbed (r = .20). In addition, there is a relationship also between the number of visits and the worker's perception that the two parents have somewhat different attitudes with respect to rearing the child (r = .28). When the number of visits is reduced to a summary code of average number of visits per month, including the visits reported for the period prior to the Round I interview as well as all those reported for the interval between the two rounds of data collection -- even when two different workers are involved -- it appears that the number of visits is somewhat more highly related to the child's degree of disturbance (r = .27), and is also correlated with the worker's rating of how difficult the child is to have in a family group (r = .24). There is also an indication that the worker visits more regularly those homes where she perceives the mother as being personally annoyed by the child's behavior (r = .27). One bit of evidence that these more frequent visits may be fruitful is to be found in the relationship between the teacher's report of improvement in the child's behavior and the frequency of visits as reported by the worker (r = .23). It appears then that there is a tendency for the worker to put greater effort into those placements which might be judged as in the greatest need of casework help.

Other relationships exist between the social worker's perception of the foster mother's attitudes and the number of interviews, and they are reported here even though the cause and effect relationships cannot be determined from our data. For example, the worker's rating of the willingness of the foster mother to discuss her problems regarding the child in a casework interview is significantly related to the actual number of casework interviews the social worker reports having had with the foster mother during the two months prior to the Round I interview (r = .25). Of those mothers who are described as very willing, a considerably larger percent have been interviewed at least four times (35 percent) than of those who are described as not at all willing to discuss problems regarding the child with the worker (9 percent having been interviewed four times or more). This suggests that the workers are putting effort into working with those mothers who are most receptive to help.

Although our data indicate that the caseworkers have considerably less familiarity and contact with the foster father, some of these same relationships hold for the fathers. For example, those foster fathers who report discussing problems with the workers are the ones whom the workers report as knowing best (r = .35), and there is an even higher relationship with the foster father's own feeling that he is known well by the worker (r = .48). Those fathers who feel the worker knows them well are also the most likely to call the worker on the phone (r = .33). In general, however, the foster fathers are not well-known and are infrequently, if at all, seen for casework interviews, according to our data. Information obtained at the time of the Round I interviews with the social workers indicates that fewer than one-half of the fathers had been seen during the prior two months in a casework interview, and that 17 percent of the fathers had never been seen for a casework interview. Of those who had, about two-thirds had been seen in a joint casework interview with their wives.

Concluding Comments

Although one of the initial goals of this project was to collect data which would permit an assessment of the contribution of the casework process to the success of the placement, this is not possible because of the variability in the lengths of the placement, in the length of supervision of the present placement, and the turnover in social worker staff during the time covered by this study. There appears to be a relationship between the worker's rating of success and the same worker's evaluation of the productivity of the casework relationship with the foster mother, but the factors contributing to this association cannot be clearly understood from our data. There also appears to be a low but significant relationship between the degree of disturbance shown by the child and the average number of visits made by the social worker to the home. This is in keeping with casework expectations that the more difficult the child is for the foster parents to handle, the greater support and help they need to be given by the caseworker.

There is no doubt of the possibility of obtaining precise information from the workers regarding objective details such as the number of visits to the home, the number of casework interviews with different members of the foster family, as well as subjective evaluations of both social workers' and foster parents' attitudes toward the productivity of the casework relationship.

Chapter VIII

THE SEARCH FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF "SUCCESSFUL" FOSTER FAMILIES

We have examined the criterion of "success" used in this study in Chapter VI and on the whole find evidence that it is highly reliable and valid. In this chapter we will describe our attempts to find ways of predicting this rating in advance -- preferably at the time of the intake study of foster parent applicants. At such a time, no social worker would be in a position to provide the kinds of information reported in Chapter VI; agencies would have to depend upon the applicants themselves to reveal characteristics which would be of use in predicting whether they would be relatively "successful" or not with "disturbed" children. This of course is the way agencies have been functioning, and it is only in the hope of finding clearer predictors to "success" that this study has been conducted.

For these purposes a number of "areas" of information have been investigated in considerable detail. For each of these areas, the rationale for including them as a topic of investigation will be briefly stated, along with a description of the kinds of items included, the relationships found with the global success rating and evidence for the validity of the specific item. In the following chapter, the ways in which these variables were then combined in an attempt to predict global success will be described.

Demographic Characteristics and Socio-Economic Status

This group of items is listed first for several reasons: (1) information regarding demographic characteristics and certain factual information leading to socio-economic classification is one of the easiest kinds of information to obtain reliably and with relatively little effort, and (2) socio-economic classification has been found in numerous sociological studies to account for a considerable part of the variance in attitudes and behaviors -- parent behavior being no exception.[25]

---

[25] See for example, John C. Glidewell, (Ed.) Parental attitudes and child behavior, Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1961.

However, the sample represented in this group of foster families is extremely truncated, consisting in general of older parents than would be found as natural parents of children of these ages, and of a group restricted almost completely in educational level to high school graduation or less. Consequently, even the correlations between demographic items and those of socio-economic status are lower than often found (see Table 20).

Table 20

Relationships Among Various Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics and the Social Worker's Evaluation of the Foster Parents' Success

	Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics					
Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics	Foster Father Age	Foster Mother Age	Foster Father Education	Foster Mother Education	Foster Father's Occupation	Social Worker's Rating of Foster Parents' General Economic Level
Foster Father Age	-					
Foster Mother Age	92[a]	-				
Foster Father Education	-39	-32	-			
Foster Mother Education	-31	-28	37	-		
Foster Father's Occupation	09	13	-14	07	-	
Social Worker's Rating of Foster Parents' General Economic Level	14	13	-26	-13	16	
Social Worker's Ratings of Foster Parents' Success						
Foster Mother I	-16	-09	11	11	21	29
Foster Mother II	-17	-19	20	14	30	39
Foster Father I	-15	-14	19	16	12	32
Foster Father II	-07	-09	19	08	26	41
Foster Family I	-16	-11	15	15	19	32
Foster Family II	-15	-18	20	15	30	39

[a] Decimal points are omitted.

Chapter VIII

THE SEARCH FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF "SUCCESSFUL" FOSTER FAMILIES

We have examined the criterion of "success" used in this study in Chapter VI and on the whole find evidence that it is highly reliable and valid. In this chapter we will describe our attempts to find ways of predicting this rating in advance -- preferably at the time of the intake study of foster parent applicants. At such a time, no social worker would be in a position to provide the kinds of information reported in Chapter VI; agencies would have to depend upon the applicants themselves to reveal characteristics which would be of use in predicting whether they would be relatively "successful" or not with "disturbed" children. This of course is the way agencies have been functioning, and it is only in the hope of finding clearer predictors to "success" that this study has been conducted.

For these purposes a number of "areas" of information have been investigated in considerable detail. For each of these areas, the rationale for including them as a topic of investigation will be briefly stated, along with a description of the kinds of items included, the relationships found with the global success rating and evidence for the validity of the specific item. In the following chapter, the ways in which these variables were then combined in an attempt to predict global success will be described.

Demographic Characteristics and Socio-Economic Status

This group of items is listed first for several reasons: (1) information regarding demographic characteristics and certain factual information leading to socio-economic classification is one of the easiest kinds of information to obtain reliably and with relatively little effort, and (2) socio-economic classification has been found in numerous sociological studies to account for a considerable part of the variance in attitudes and behaviors -- parent behavior being no exception.[25]

---

[25] See for example, John C. Glidewell, (Ed.) Parental attitudes and child behavior, Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1961.

Barely significant correlations are found for the relationship between the foster parents' age or educational level with some of the success ratings although it is always possible that in another sample of foster parents with a wider range in age and education, that both characteristics would be of considerable importance. The only items which show highly significant relationships with the success rating are the foster father's occupational level and the social worker's rating of the general level of living of the foster family. There is no completely satisfactory rationale for a general occupational code including farmers and non-farmers, and since approximately 40 percent of the foster fathers in this study are farmers, the overall correlation between "success" and occupation may not be accurately represented in the correlation shown.[26]

However, using the occupational classification described in Chapter V, with farmers ranked next to the managers and independent businessmen, a sizeable correlation with success is found and is slightly increased when computed only on the non-farm group (.39).

The rating of the "general economic level of the foster family," made by the social worker in the Round II Interview (question 100) consisted of a detailed rating referring actually to the "level of living" of the foster family. (See page 51 in Chapter V for a detailed description.) This rating was designed to take into account simultaneously two factors which cannot be represented by income data alone: (1) the size of the family being rated in terms of whether there is any surplus income beyond that required for necessity, and (2) the efficiency of income or resource management. Evidence that this rating is taking into account aspects of "level of living" which are not revealed by income data alone is indicated by a detailed analysis of its relationship to income data as obtained from the tax rolls, in which a barely significant correlation is shown with non-farm income, and no significant correlation with farm income.

Evidence that this rating is providing an estimate of the general economic level of the foster family is to be found in its significant correlation with the social worker ratings of the condition of the outside and inside of the foster home (.28 and .39). It is to be expected that other aspects of the "level of living" in the foster home would enter into this rating, and it would not be expected to correlate very highly with the condition of the home or with any other single aspect of the economic level of the family.

---

[26] Albert J. Reiss, Occupations and social status, New York: Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1961.

Characteristics of the Foster Parents' Own Natal Families

One of the general hypotheses in social casework is that the kinds of parents an individual has and his relationship with them and with his siblings during his growing-up years have a significant influence upon the kind of person he becomes, and very possibly in particular upon the kind of parent he becomes.[27] For these reasons a series of questions regarding their own mothers and fathers and relationships with siblings were included in the foster mother and foster father Round I Interview (questions 54-85 in the mother's interview).

Own Parents

The assumptions which underlie this line of questioning are that in talking about his own parents an adult is likely (a) to indicate his own attitude toward various aspects of the parental role and possible conflicts over aspects of it, and (b) to indicate whether, according to his perceptions, his own parents were satisfied and whether he had a satisfactory model with whom to identify in his own parental role. Questions regarding the following characteristics of their own fathers and mothers were asked each foster parent: educational achievement, occupation, size of community in which they grew up, general economic level, number of siblings, strictness, willingness to explain reasons for asking child to do something, use of physical punishment in disciplining, expression of affection, and extent to which the parent was religious.

It is of some interest to find that there are significant correlations between a foster parent's own educational achievement and that of both his parents, suggesting that there are family achievement patterns. However, when the data are examined for items which correlate significantly with the global "success" rating (II), there are relatively few:

(1) There is a consistent and highly significant positive relationship between the foster father's report that both his parents were affectionate toward him while he was growing up and his success ratings. Although this report cannot be validated directly, it is possible to examine other reports

---

[27] In particular see Lorene E. Stringer and David J. Pittman, The unmeasured residual in current research on parental attitudes and child behavior. In John E. Glidewell (ed.), op. cit., 167-173.

given by the foster father as evidence of its validity. Our reasoning was as follows: If the foster father says his parents were more affectionate toward him, it is probable that they would be less likely to have used physical punishment with him and to have been more likely to explain the reasons to him for wanting him to do something which he did not want to do. The expected relationships occur. The foster father who reports that his parents were affectionate also is likely to report that they explained reasons to him for wanting him to do things (r = .41). An even higher relationship (.53) is found between the foster father's report that his own father was affectionate and was willing to explain reasons. Also, it is interesting to note that there is no significant relationship between the report of his father's being affectionate and his father's use of physical punishment: the relationship found appears to be entirely due to his report of whether his mother used physical punishment. However, since his report regarding his father's expression of affection is extremely highly correlated with the combined report of both parents (.87), his report about both is used in the analysis as it would seem to be somewhat more stable, having been derived from two separate reports.

A number of other relationships which provide evidence of the validity of this rating are in its correlation with both Round I and II ratings of the foster father's "warmth" by the social worker (.27 and .38) and of the extent to which he takes the foster child's needs into account (.38).[28] We would interpret this report to mean that the foster father who reports his parents as affectionate is himself more affectionate as a parent.

(2) The foster mother's reports regarding characteristics of her parents do not show consistent significant relationships with the success ratings except for her report about whether her mother was religious (or her parents were). The underlying meaning of this is not clear, although from a re-examination of the interviews, it appears that a mother who is described as "very religious" is also "very strict" and rigid (although the correlations do not support this). Such an interpretation, however, finds support in the

---

[28] A certain number of significant correlations may be expected by chance in any matrix, but by chance also they would be expected to be no more meaningful than meaningless. When the only significant correlations appear meaningful, we have used them. Another check against placing belief in chance correlations is our use only of variables which correlate significantly with the Round I as well as the Round II success ratings (foster mother and foster father separately as well as family ratings).

negative correlations (low but significant) between "mother's being very religious" and the social worker's ratings of the foster home as suitable (-.28), of the foster mother as secure in her role (-.21) and the foster mother's ability to adapt her standards (-.24).

(3) Relationship with siblings was covered briefly in the interviews and was examined particularly for evidence that (a) the existence of siblings made a difference (but there were too few parents without siblings), and that (b) the particular relationship a foster mother had with her siblings -- whether in a caretaker role or not, and whether a good or poor relationship with her brothers in particular (as preparation for caring for "difficult" boys). No consistent correlations with the success ratings were found.

(4) The family structure of both foster parents' natal families was studied in terms of the autocratic-democratic dimension, i.e. "autocratic" meaning that authority or power was invested in one parent or decisions were made by one parent, and "democratic" meaning that both parents shared in the power and decisions. This information was obtained from the reports made by each foster parent regarding their mother's and father's use of physical punishment. In addition, a series of questions was asked the foster mother during the Round II interview regarding six different situations in her natal family and also in the present foster family to determine whether each was handled in an "autocratic" or "democratic" manner (questions 24-41).[29] A summary of the "autocratic-democratic" structure in the foster parents' natal families did not show consistently significant correlation with the success rating.

Characteristics of the Present Foster Family

Detailed information was obtained from the foster parents regarding a number of dimensions of the foster family. The rationale for each will be presented as they are listed, along with the findings regarding the significance of these items.

---

[29] This information was originally gathered in order to test the hypothesis that foster mothers who "replicated," that is, repeated the family pattern of authority which had existed in their natal family would be more likely to be successful than those who "innovated" a new family pattern. However, an analysis in these terms did not produce data which could very readily be combined across areas, because of the substantial number of mothers reporting a mixed pattern in their families. Also, there seemed to be differences in meaning between mothers who replicated an autocratic pattern and those who replicated a democratic pattern. Further study of this hypothesis is required.

(1) The composition of the foster family in terms of the number, ages, and sex of its own children living in the home at the time of the Round I interview was studied because of the possible relevance of the following characteristics: (a) the presence of a grown child of the foster family might provide an additional "parent figure" for the child, and also, if the same sex as the child, an appropriate model for identification of the foster child; (b) the presence of own children in the foster family close in age to that of the foster child may create situations of sibling rivalry.

Unfortunately, no satisfactory way of describing the composition of a foster family in an ordinal scale exists, and we have resorted mainly to dichotomies to describe each of these various characteristics of the foster family. When each is examined in turn, no significant correlations with the success ratings are found except for the relationship between the total number of children living in the foster home and success, indicating that in general the more successful homes contain more children. However, this relationship drops to an insignificant level when the foster child's "degree of disturbance" is taken into account.

(A significant relationship which is not affected by this additional variable however, is between the total number of children of the foster parents and their success rating, (regardless of whether the children live at home or have left home, or are natural or adopted), indicating that more successful parents are those who have had more children of their own and thus more extensive experience in child-rearing.)

(2) Evidence of differentiation in the attitudes of the foster parents toward their own children expressed in answers to questions regarding differences in getting along with own children and sources of satisfaction and concern (questions 96-98 in foster mother Round I interview). One of the early hypotheses formulated in planning this study was that foster parents who show the ability to differentiate among their own children will be able to individualize foster children.

Several ratings representing (a) the "degree to which a foster parent refers to own children as being individually different," (b) the degree of "child-centered" satisfaction, and (c) the degree of "child-centered" concern, the latter two based on evidence that the parent focuses primarily on interest and/or concern in his child's growth or development rather than the gratification of his own needs or expectations. No relationships between these ratings and the success ratings were found.

(3) Number of areas in which the foster parents are "autocratic" as contrasted with "democratic."

As mentioned above, a series of questions (questions 24-41 in the foster mother Round II interview) was asked the foster mother regarding the distribution of authority in the foster family. If only one parent was said to make the decisions or carry the responsibilities, the authority structure was rated as "autocratic;" if both parents were involved, it was rated "democratic." The correlation of distribution of authority in these six areas are generally significant but not high, indicating that we have a sampling of a considerable variety of situations. A code based on the number of these areas in which the family structure was "autocratic" showed a consistent and significant negative relationship with the success ratings.

(4) Evidence of teamwork of foster parents.

Each foster parent was asked about the degree of support he or she received from the other in regard to being a foster parent, and the reports were combined in a summary code ranging from those families in which each parent reported that the other "actively encouraged" his (her) being a foster parent to those families in which neither parent reported this. Each of the separate codes as well as this summary code shows a significant correlation with the success ratings, indicating that those families in which both parents support each other are more successful.

Since it is the foster mother who is typically the more interested in becoming a foster parent, one way of checking the validity of this report is to examine the relationship of it with independent judgments of the foster father's involvement in being a foster parent. These ratings were made by a trained coder, using the entire content of the foster father's Round I interview for one, and the content of the social worker's Round II interview for the other. Significant correlations between each of these ratings of the "foster father's involvement" and the summary of "teamwork" are found (.43 and .30).

Foster Parents' Relationship With the Larger Family and Their Friends

The rationale for studying the degree of support which the foster parents reported receiving from members of their larger families and from their friends comes from two sources: (a) Fanshel's [30] finding that social "alienation" is highly correlated with the foster mother's exploitive use of the foster parent role, and (b) the impression in Wisconsin that there are families in certain communities in which foster parenthood is a family tradition which is highly valued.

---

[30] David Fanshel, Specializations within the foster parent role: A research report. Part II: Foster parents caring for the "acting-out" and the handicapped child. Child Welfare, April, 1961, 19-23.

For these reasons a series of questions was asked the foster mother and foster father in the Round I interview as to whether each had received "active encouragement, approval, a neutral attitude, or opposition" from each of twelve categories of persons, including various categories of relatives as well as closest friends, neighbors, church friends, and other foster parents. This information has been summarized in terms of (a) the degree of support from the larger family members (differentiating between "active encouragement" and "approval" and omitting spouse and children from this summary), and (b) the degree of support received from close friends, neighbors, and church friends has also been summarized in a seven point code. These two summaries of degree of support show a significant positive correlation with each other (.44 for the foster mother and .41 for the foster father), and consequently have been combined into one code for each foster parent.

Admittedly this is a very rough method of estimating the degree of support which the foster mother and foster father feel they receive from other persons, and more precise information could no doubt be obtained from a more detailed series of questions. Evidence that the "sources of opposition" mentioned by the foster mother may represent a more general feeling of "alienation" is to be found in the negative correlations of this variable with the foster mother's report of encouragement from her husband (-.51), or of the report that they discuss their troubles with each other (-.23). Further evidence of its meaning may be found in its correlation with the number of areas in which the foster family is autocratic (.26) and in the correlation with the foster mother's report that her parents used physical punishment in disciplining her (.24).

Since the total number of sources of support a foster mother reports and the total number of sources of opposition are not significantly related to each other, they appear to be separate dimensions. Therefore both these variables are used in predicting to success.

The foster mothers were also asked which of these various persons they had talked with about their own troubles or problems concerning the foster child, and which persons had come to them with problems (question 41, Round I). Their answers were combined to indicate the extent of their "reciprocal" relationships, i.e., both going to others with problems and having others come to them. Responses regarding their husbands were analyzed separately from those regarding relatives and friends. Foster mothers who report such a "reciprocal" relationship with their spouses are more likely also to report being actively encouraged by their husbands in the foster parent role (r = .33), and also more likely to report a "reciprocal" relationship with other persons outside the immediate family. However, neither of these reports of "reciprocal" relationships is significantly correlated with the "success" rating.

Responses of Foster Mothers to Hypothetical Behavior Problems

Since foster parent applicants will not generally have had any experience with "disturbed" children, it is important to learn if possible whether they have particular attitudes toward certain kinds of problem behavior. We have hypothesized that such applicants are able to provide information regarding their attitudes toward and possible handling of various kinds of difficult behavior. Consequently, a series of questions describing six different hypothetical behavior problems (questions 46-67 in the foster mother Round II interview) were developed and used with our present sample of foster mothers. These particular descriptions were chosen for several specific reasons: first of all, to represent the kinds of behavior identified by the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule (the defiant child, the withdrawn child, the slow child, the child who lies) and also two of the most common behavior problems described by the foster mothers in the Round I interviews -- the stubborn child, and the child who is "hard on his clothes and furniture in the foster home." They were also selected to provide a sampling of different degrees of "power" or authority struggles between parent and child (the defiant child who refuses to do what he is asked, the stubborn child, the child who lies, and to a lesser extent, the child who is careless with clothes and furniture). Two ("the child who is quiet, likes to be alone, and doesn't seem to enjoy being around you" and "the child who can't seem to learn easily") were selected in order to elicit reactions to these specific kinds of problem behavior.

The foster mother was first asked how easy or difficult she felt it would be to handle each of these kinds of problems, followed by two open questions, one regarding the reasons for her rating, and the other regarding the ways in which she would handle the particular behavior described.

Considerable analysis of the responses to these questions has been done and there is a variety of evidence that the foster mothers did indeed respond to them in differential ways. For example, the foster mother's reactions to the questions of how easy or difficult it would be to handle a defiant child, one who lies, one who is careless with clothes and furniture, and one who is stubborn are all significantly intercorrelated, ranging from .33 to .41. But her appraisal of handling a withdrawn child as easy or difficult is not related to any of the others, nor is her appraisal of handling a slow child. A similar pattern occurs in the ratings made of the degree of confidence revealed in her answers. There is consistent evidence that her reactions to these two kinds of problems (handling a withdrawn child and a slow child) are not related to each other or to her reactions to the other problems. However, neither her initial reactions (of whether it would be difficult or easy to handle each behavior) nor her degree of confidence expressed in later answers show any significant correlations with the "success" ratings except for one -- the degree of confidence she expresses regarding handling the withdrawn child (.21).

An additional summary code was developed for the mother's responses to each of these behavior problems. This was a judgment of whether she would be regarded as a "good" or "poor" risk in her handling of each. The criteria for a "good" risk generally included recognition that the particular behavior was caused, some awareness on the part of the foster mother of her own reaction to the behavior, possibly finding it troubling or difficult, but not extremely upsetting, and not made to feel completely helpless by it. This rating of the mother as a "good or poor risk" also includes a fairly large component of a "child-centered point of view," (determined by correlations with another independent rating of the answers to each problem situation) in regard to every problem except that of handling the careless child. But the rating of the mother as a "good" risk is significantly related to the degree of confidence she expresses only in regard to handling the careless child, the slow child, and the one who is stubborn -- all three of which could be regarded as less serious behavior than the other three behaviors.

By far the most consistent relationships with the success ratings are found with the rating of the foster mother as a "good" risk in handling a defiant child. Evidence of the validity of this rating is to be found in its significant correlation with the social worker's rating of the foster parents' problem-handling skill (.26), of the extent to which the foster mother takes the child's needs into account (.29), and with Round I ratings of how secure the mother is in her maternal role (.49), and how consistent she is (.32). The latter two ratings, made by the social worker approximately seven months earlier, lend considerable support to the validity of this rating, particularly since this behavior was included primarily to elicit the foster mother's attitude toward a "power" struggle, with the underlying hypothesis that a mother who is not secure in her own role is not likely to handle such behavior successfully. This is clearly supported by the correlations with the social workers' evaluations of the foster mother.

The Foster Parent Attitude Questionnaire

Prior to the Round II interviews, the Foster Parent Attitude Questionnaire was developed so that its utility as an instrument could be tested on this sample of foster parents about whom so much information was available.[31] It was developed by a member of the project staff who first reviewed all of the available material related to parent attitude questionnaires and selected attitude categories that had been found to discriminate among parents or foster parents. Items were then developed using phraseology based, insofar as possible, on actual quotations from the Round I interviews of the foster parents. Statements were selected if they were related to the generalized meaning of the attitude categories found useful in other studies, or of categories for which criterion measures existed (or could be developed) in the data of this study. These statements were reworded if necessary to minimize the social desirability of a particular response, and considerable revision was made after a pretest on a small sample of foster parents.

Statements pertaining to the following fourteen attitude categories were included in the schedule:

Warmth
Rigidity
Consistency
Sensitivity to withdrawal
Acceptance of the child as he is
Ambivalence
Self/child orientation
Willingness to explain
Social adoption
Differential response
Adaptation of standards
Social alienation (Srole)
Strictness
Unclassified

---

[31] See Appendix F for a copy of this schedule, which was developed by Harold E. Warstler when a member of this staff.

This Questionaire was administered to each foster mother and foster father at the time of the Round II collection of data and was read aloud by the interviewer in order to minimize any differences which might be attributable to reading skill. It was also completed by the social workers.

A four-point response scale was used: Strongly agree, mildly agree, mildly disagree, strongly disagree.

Each item was scored so that the highest score (4) would be given to the theoretically "correct" answer, determined in relation to the specific dimension or category which the item was hypothetically measuring. Out of the total of 52 items, 15 were phrased so that the "correct" response was agreement; in the remaining 37 items disagreement was "correct."

An initial analysis indicated that there were no significant correlations between the criterion measures and the sums of scores on items in each attitude category. These criterion scores were of two kinds: (1) social workers' ratings of the foster parent's warmth, strictness, consistency, acceptance of the foster child, and evidence of rejection of the foster child -- all made during the Round I interviews approximately seven months prior to the time this questionnaire was completed, and (2) ratings based on the Round I interviews with the foster mother (made by trained coders) of the mother's rigidity, self-child orientation, and extent of reliance on the social worker. (It had been initially expected that the Weekly Behavior Reports sent in by the foster mothers would be a suitable source of a number of ratings, but the wide variation in the amount of detail reported and in the expression of personal feeling or attitudes by the foster mother was so great that reliable ratings could not be made.)

Since the assignment of items to the attitude categories was made according to the hypothetical meaning of each category, it seemed possible that the absence of correlation might be due to a poor grouping of items. Therefore, the items were regrouped according to two different kinds of criteria:

(1) Those items which showed intercorrelations with each other were grouped; by this method seven categories using 32 items were constructed:

Tolerant attitude toward child behavior
Therapeutically action-oriented
Strictness
Rigidity
Social alienation
Warmth
Willingness to accept help

(2) The foster mothers' responses to the questions were factor analyzed, using alpha factor analysis, and oblique rotation was performed, yielding 19 factors at first, and subsequently fewer factors when a smaller number was retained.[31]

Reliability, as computed by the Hoyt formula of internal consistency, was found to be .83 for both the total score and a revised total (omitting 9 items for reasons of ambiguity or multi-dimensionality) on the foster mother attitude questionnaire and .80 for the foster father attitude questionnaire.

The correlations between various criterion measures and both the re-groupings of items made on the basis of a simple intercorrelational analysis and the groups which were determined by the factor analysis were obtained. Although the original intent was to develop sub-scores based on certain dimensions, it appears that the total score modified by the omission of nine ambiguous items from the foster mother's attitude questionnaire is a more reliable and stable measure than any of the sub-scores. Furthermore, it shows consistently significant and reasonably high correlations with all of the separate dimensions and with a number of criterion measures. It appears that the questionnaire as a whole provides a measure of a "child-centered point of view," supported by the positive correlations of the total score with the rating of the mother's "child" orientation based on the content of the foster mother's Round I interview (.30), and with the social worker's Round II rating of the extent to which the foster mother takes the child's specific needs into account in handling him (.40).

The total score obtained by the foster mother correlates .43 with that of the foster father. Evidence for the validity of the foster father's scores (either total or sub-scores) is considerably less, however, but may be due primarily to the fact that the factor analysis was based only on the foster mothers' questionnaires, and the criterion ratings were based on the foster mother interviews with one exception. The rating based on the content of the foster father's Round I interview indicating his "degree of involvement" with the foster child correlates .32 with his total score (modified by the exclusion of nine items) and .39 with his sub-score on the "warmth" dimension. This and other evidence suggests that his sub-score on "warmth," based on only five items, might be as satisfactory a score as his total score, with which it correlates .72.

---

[31] Henry F. Kaiser and John Caffrey, Alpha factor analysis. Psychometrika, 1965, 30, 1-14.

This sub-score on "warmth" is also significantly correlated with a number of other sub-scores on the questionnaire, particularly with the Srole items, and with sums in two factor groups (provisionally named Planfulness, or "Absence of Helplessness", consisting of items 27 and 31, and Selective Firmness, consisting of items 15, 19, and 39). The score on this latter factor group is supported by the social worker's rating of how often the foster father is uncertain in responding to his children.

Factor Analysis of Potential Predictors to "Success"

Although many of the individual items examined for possible use as predictors to the global "success" rating do not show significant correlations with this rating, it seemed desirable to perform a factor analysis in order to see if a clear factor structure would emerge. If so, the factors might well be better predictors than the individual items.

A total of 58 items were included in the factor analysis, including almost all of the items described in the preceding sections.[32] The principal axes computing algorithm was used with the square of the multiple correlation as a measure of communality, and with varimax rotation. When twenty factors were extracted, 59 percent of the total variance was common variance. All but one of these factors makes sense conceptually. Several are single-item factors. A number of the single predictive items showing the highest correlation with the "success" ratings do not show a high loading in any factor and consequently do not appear in the list of factors. The most important of these are the following (See Table 21):

General economic level of the family
Foster mother's report that her parents were religious
Number of natural children of foster parents
Number of areas in which the foster parents are autocratic
Report from foster mother and foster father that each receives encouragement from the other
Foster mother judged a good risk in handling a defiant child

Evidence for the validity of these factors is mainly to be found in the material presented in earlier sections regarding support for the validity of the individual items. The association of several items in a factor tells us only that these items tend to be responded to in similar ways by an individual.

---

[32] See Appendix H for a list of the items included in the factor analysis and of the item loadings in each factor.

Table 21

Areas Examined for Possible Predictors to "Success" and Most Useful Single Items

Items Selected	Social Workers' Rating					
	Foster Mother I	Foster Mother II	Foster Father I	Foster Father II	Foster Family I	Foster Family II
Demographic characteristics and socio-economic status						
Foster father's occupation	21[a]	30	12	26	19	30
General economic level of family	29	39	32	41	32	41
Foster parents' own natal families						
Foster father's report that his parents were affectionate	05	12	29	37	16	21
Foster mother's report that her parents were religious	-20	-23	-31	-32	-25	-26
Characteristics of present foster family						
Number of natural or adopted children of foster parents	12	27	06	25	10	26
Number of areas in which foster parents are autocratic	-19	-28	-28	-38	-23	-31
Parents actively support each other in role as foster parents	23	30	30	35	27	33
Support from others						
Foster mother's report of the extent of opposition to her taking foster child	-30	-20	-35	-12	-30	-12
Foster mother's report of sources of active support for her taking foster child	15	16	14	20	17	18
Hypothetical Behavior Problems						
"Good" risk in handling a defiant child	39	32	29	29	33	27
Confidence in handling a withdrawn child	14	21	13	20	13	21
Foster Parent Attitude Questionnaire						
Total score made by foster mother	21	32	24	18	23	31
Foster father's score on "selective firmness"	-11	-18	-06	-32	-11	-22
Foster father's score on "warmth"	22	18	21	12	25	18

[a] Decimal points are omitted.

Table 22

Correlation Coefficients between Scores on Factors of Predictive Items and Global "Success" Ratings

		Social Workers' Ratings					
	Factors	Foster Mother I	Foster Mother II	Foster Father I	Foster Father II	Foster Family I	Foster Family II
I	Handling a defiant child-confidence	13[a]	03	20	-02	14	00
II	Handling a withdrawn child-confidence	09	14	11	15	08	13
III	Degree of support from family and friends	17	19	21	16	20	16
IV	Close interpersonal relationship skill of foster mother	00	-02	-01	-02	-01	-02
V	FM's report of economically secure and satisfied natal family	-12	-12	-07	-16	-09	-16
VI	Handling a stubborn child-good risk and confidence	06	12	07	09	08	13
VII	FF's report of parents' strictness and discipline	10	09	26	25	21	19
[b]VIII	No. of areas in which FM's parents were autocratic	11	05	09	10	10	04
[b]IX	FM judged a good risk with a withdrawn child	01	19	-02	18	-01	21
X	FF's occupation and place of residence of foster family	21	28	14	34	20	32
XI	FF's report of natal economic level, affectionate, father gave reasons	03	12	24	30	13	19
XII	FM report of natal strictness, affection; father gave reasons	-08	-09	-04	06	-05	-04
[b]XIII	FM concern for own children	11	06	02	10	08	06
[b]XIV	FF report of active encouragement from FM	17	24	21	13	19	22
XVI	Child-oriented attitudes	25	23	24	14	26	20
XVII	FM age, FM and FF education	14	22	19	18	19	23
XVIII	FF warm; FM good risk w/slow child	27	24	22	21	27	23
XIX	No. of FF's sibs; FF education	12	17	20	20	15	19
XX	FF's parents satisfied, religious	27	13	18	08	24	11

[a] Decimal points are omitted.

[b] Single-item factors.

When these factors are correlated with the "success" ratings (Table 22) it is clear that they are not strong predictors and that only a small number show significant correlations with the family "success" rating II.

Summary

In this chapter our search for items which would predict foster family "success" (as defined by the Round II ratings of social workers) has been described. A considerable amount of information related to a number of different areas has been examined, and many items dropped from consideration because they were uncorrelated with "success," or, although correlated, did not upon further study show any evidence of concurrent validity, or because they were not suitable for inclusion in an intake study. The items which were kept out of this number show relatively consistent correlations with the Round I and Round II "success" ratings and have some demonstrable validity (see Table 21).

In addition, the larger number of items which could be part of an intake study were factor analyzed and nineteen meaningful factors identified. These factors do not include some of the more important of the single items, and on the whole do not appear to be very useful predictors to "success". It is apparent that none of the correlations of the single items (Table 21) or of the factors (Table 22) with "success" is sufficiently large to be of any value whatever in a selection process. However, this is on the whole not surprising in view of the complexity of the subject we are studying. In fact, if a few excellent predictors existed, they would most likely be well understood and identified by now.

As the first step beyond the present report, we strongly recommend that an attempt be made to improve the quality of these items which have been identified as possible predictors to "success." The finding that a number of them fail to appear in any factor indicates that they alone represent a dimension. Further work to explore the areas of information which they represent and to develop additional measures would seem highly desirable.

Even though the need for improved measures is clear, there is also some merit in carrying the analysis of these items a bit further to try out their effectiveness in combination with each other. It is to this question that the next chapter is addressed.

Chapter IX

TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE "SUCCESS" OF A FOSTER HOME BE PREDICTED ON THE BASIS OF OUR PRESENT FINDINGS?

In the previous chapter we have described the various areas which were investigated in the search for items that could conceivably be obtained from foster parent applicants at the time of intake study. Our goal has been to identify items which would contribute significantly to the prediction of the dependent variable -- the "success" of the foster home. A number of items have been identified which for the most part show statistically significant, albeit relatively low, correlations with the family "success" rating, and although they are regarded as tentative in the sense that they need further study and refinement, they do meet certain basic requirements: there is some evidence in supporting data for the validity of each one, and there is also some additional evidence in the consistent correlations they show with the "success" ratings that they probably do not represent chance relationships. Some of these items emerge as factors when the data are factor analyzed, but a number of the more significant items fail to show a high loading in any factor and hence are retained simply as individual items. Evidence for the validity of the factors is mainly to be found in the material presented in earlier sections regarding support for the validity of the individual items.

Since no one of these items or factors has much predictive potential if used alone, it is necessary to pool their effectiveness in some statistical way in order to see what predictive power they might have in combination. It is important to answer such a question at this point in the research, for if these items in combination should not yield a multiple correlation much above the level of the correlations of the single variables with "success," it would then seem wiser to make a fresh start in the search for predictors than to invest further effort in these variables or in the avenues suggested by them. It is primarily for this reason that we have used the technique of multiple correlation and regression. In other respects this work is still in an exploratory stage, and the great precision implied by multiple regression (as in the calculation of beta weights, for example) is somewhat misleading in the sense that the measures are not sufficiently refined to be used in such a precise way at present.

The computer program for stepwise regression, described earlier in Chapter VI, in which the independent variables (the predictive items) are ordered according to the contribution each makes in reducing the unexplained variance, meets our particular needs exactly. At each step, the program computes (and prints) the percent of the variance which can be accounted for at that point. For example, when a third independent variable is added, the program indicates how much additional variance is accounted for by this one variable over and above that which is already accounted for.

Two multiple regression analyses are shown here. In the first (Table 23), the items used as independent variables are those listed in Table 21 in the previous chapter and are all single items of information. In the second (Table 24) the total of 24 independent variables includes 14 factors (II, III, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XIII, XVI, XVII, XVIII and XX), 7 of the individual items from Table 21 which are not included in any factor, and three ratings based on answers given by the foster mothers to semi-projective stories. These three ratings (and a fourth, which is included in Factor XVI) were obtained during the Round III collection of data, which is described in detail in Chapter X. The rationale for including them in this multiple regression is two-fold: (1) they, like the other information, could be included in an intake study, and (2) we were interested in seeing if they would contribute significantly to the multiple correlation.

Both these analyses are based on a total of 96 foster families instead of 102. Those in which there is no foster father have had to be omitted because of the inclusion of a number of items requiring information from and about the foster father as well as the foster mother.

The way in which the first 15 items were ordered by the program is shown in each table. The last column indicates the percent of the variance each item is able to account for, independent of all the items which precede it.

As indicated in Table 23, a combination of 8 of these single items yields a multiple correlation of .69, in which almost one-half of the variance in the success rating is accounted for. Beyond this point, the addition of successive variables contributes very small and statistically insignificant increments to the variance accounted for, although the multiple correlation of .71 is statistically significant in that it is highly unlikely that it could have occurred by chance (.001 level). The first 8 variables are described briefly below in the order in which they appear:

1. The rating of the general economic level of the foster family shows the highest zero-order correlation with success and therefore would be expected to head the list. This means that the more comfortable the economic level (within the limits of the present sample) the more likely the family is to be rated as "successful" in caring for a foster child. Two special conditions of this rating must be kept in mind in interpreting it, however: one is the fact that it is a judgment made by the social worker in answer to a much more complex question than that concerning economic level alone, and as such, most probably takes into account the size of the family and the family's skill in "resource management" as well as some assessment of its economic resources. Hence it probably includes an ability component. The second condition which must be kept in mind is the truncated nature of our sample, which appears very restricted in terms of age, education, and even occupation, and hence may be regarded as most probably truncated also in regard to economic level, which would mean that the highest economic levels are probably not represented at all.[33] The best way to describe the economic or living levels which are represented in this sample is in terms of the rating the social worker made: (a) those at the "subsistence level," who just manage to break even most of the time but occasionally are in debt or in want, (b) those at the "sufficient income" level, with enough income to satisfy the family's subsistence needs but no extra money, and (c) those at the "average income level," with some income available above and beyond the family's subsistence needs, but able to afford only an occasional luxury. It appears that the last category is more likely to be associated with "success" than the first.

2. Evidence of "teamwork" between the foster parents as revealed inversely by the number of areas in which the foster parents are autocratic is the next most important item and accounts for 9 percent of the variance. Thus those homes in which one or the other parent makes the decisions and

---

[33] The finding that the social workers could not reliably distinguish between "above average" and "average" income levels when both were defined supports this statement.

Table 23

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for All Families

Step Number	Variable Name	Multiple R	Multiple R^2	Percent of Variance Explained by Each Variable When Added
1	Foster family economic level	.4065	.1652	16.52%
2	Number of areas in which foster parents are autocratic	.5047	.2547	08.95
3	Number of foster parents' own children	.5600	.3136	05.89
4	Foster mother's report that her parents were religious	.6018	.3622	04.86
5	Teamwork: foster parents support of each other	.6342	.4022	04.01
6	Occupation of foster father	.6554	.4296	02.73
7	Foster mother a good risk with defiant child	.6751	.4557	02.62
8	Foster father's parents affectionate	.6894	.4752	01.95
9	Foster mother's confidence in handling a withdrawn child	.6979	.4870	01.18
10	Sum of items: foster mother Attitude Questionnaire	.7041	.4958	00.88
11	Extent of foster mother support	.7088	.5024	00.66
12	Foster Father Attitude Questionnaire--warmth	.7101	.5043	00.19
13	Foster Father Attitude Questionnaire--"absence of helplessness"	.7117	.5065	00.22
14	Foster father's age	.7125	.5067	00.11
15	Foster father's educational level	.7129	.5082	00.06

Dependent variable = Family Success II

N = 96 families

Table 24

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for All Families
Utilizing Factors as well as Single Items

Step Number	Variable Name	Multiple R	Multiple R^2	Percent of Variance Explained by Each Variable When Added
1	Foster family economic level	.4065	.1652	16.52%
2	No. areas in which foster parents are autocratic	.5047	.2547	08.95
3	No. of foster parents' own children	.5600	.3136	05.89
4	Factor VI-handling a stubborn child	.6151	.3784	06.48
5	Foster mother's report that her parents were religious	.6524	.4256	04.72
6	Teamwork: foster parents support of each other	.6745	.4550	02.94
7	Factor X-FF occupation and place of residence	.6919	.4787	02.38
8	Foster mother a good risk with a defiant child	.7102	.5044	02.56
9	Factor II-confidence with withdrawn	.7224	.5218	01.74
10	Factor XVI-FM Att. Ques. total, FF Att. Ques. warmth, FM response to semi-projective story re: child's crying	.7330	.5373	01.55
11	Factor XI-FF natal: economic level, father gave reasons, parents affectionate	.7424	.5512	01.39
12	Factor III-support from close friends and family	.7473	.5585	00.73
13	FM answer to semi-projective story re: broken toy	.7521	.5656	00.71
14	FM answer to semi-projective story re: stealing	.7588	.5758	01.02
15	FF Attitude Ques.: "absence of helplessness"	.7638	.5834	00.76

Dependent variable = Family Success II

N = 96 families

carries the authority--rather than both parents doing so--are less likely to be successful than homes in which the reverse is true.

3. The number of children (own or adopted) the foster family has had is the third variable, and accounts for 6 percent of the variance. The more children they have had, the more likely they are to be "successful." It does not appear that this relationship is primarily due to the difference between those families who have had no children of their own and all the others.

4. Information provided by the foster mother as to whether her parents were "religious" correlates negatively with "success," suggesting that those who describe their parents as "very religious" are less likely to be "successful." As mentioned in Chapter VIII, there is some evidence that this kind of response may represent a rigid attitude on the part of the foster mother herself, but clearly this is a dimension which requires more study.

5. Further evidence of the importance of the "teamwork" of the foster parents is found in the variable which is entered at step 5--the report from the two parents as to whether each has received active encouragement from the other in regard to the foster parent role. This item may be thought of as an indication not only that the two parents work well together, but also that each enhances the parental behavior of the other.

6. The foster father's occupational level is positively related to success; the higher the level the more likely the "success," with 3 percent of the variance being accounted for by this. Two details which must be considered are (a) the absence of any professional persons or of owners of large businesses from the sample, which is truncated in regard to occupations as well as in other ways, so that the highest occupational category is the "managers and independent businessman" and "dairy farmers" (b) the classification of "farmers" (except for the "dairy farmers") in the next to the highest category is admittedly not completely satisfactory. However, a separate analysis of the "farm" and the "non-farm" groups indicates approximately the same correlation of occupation in the "non-farm" group with "success" as we find here for the total group. This is evidence that although we may be underestimating the importance of occupational hierarchy for the total group, we are probably not overestimating it.

7. The rating of the foster mother as a "good risk" in handling a hypothetical "defiant" child is positively related with "success" and accounts for an additional 3 percent of the variance. From the kinds of cross-validating items found, it appears that the way in which the foster mother responds to this problem situation reveals to some extent her confidence and security in the parental role, as well as her skill in problem-handling and her ability to take the child's needs into account.

8. Information provided by the foster father that his parents were "affectionate" toward him correlates positively with "success," and there is a considerable variety of validating information suggesting that such a father is a somewhat warmer person himself and more likely to take the child's needs into account in interacting with him.

Examination of the second multiple regression (Table 24) indicates first of all that the picture is not changed greatly, either in regard to the ordering of the variables or in the size of the multiple correlation. A combination of 11 variables yields a multiple correlation of .74, in which 55 percent of the variance in the success rating is accounted for. And if additional variables are included, although each one contributes an insignificant increment, the multiple correlation increases to .76. Although the difference between these two regressions is relatively slight, the results of the second suggest that the use of factors along with individual items increases slightly the predictive efficiency of the data.

It is important to note that the first three items in these two regressions are identical, and further, that although a total of 24 independent variables were entered in the regression described in Table 24, the first 12 items shown in this table include the first 12 variables listed in Table 23, either as single items or as part of one of the factors. Only one item among the first 12 in Table 24 has no counterpart in Table 23, namely, Factor VI---handling a stubborn child.

The important conclusion to be reached from these analyses is that, first of all, a considerable variety of kinds of information is combined to produce the multiple correlations achieved. This combination includes purely factual information (number of own children, occupation), reports of the ways in which one or the other foster parent perceives the present family structure and the natal family, and expressions of attitudes on the part of both foster mothers and foster fathers. In addition, there is the complex evaluation of the family provided by the social worker in the rating of economic level. Taken together, this wide variety of information does not account for much more than half the variance in the success rating for the total group. Although reaching a level even as high as this is not to be minimized in any social science research, it is not sufficiently high to permit us to say that we have completely satisfactory items. (However, the level achieved is high enough to justify further work with these and other potential predictors.)

In the meantime, some additional encouragement may be found in what appear to be differences between farm and non-farm families. This was first uncovered accidentally, as well as directly suggested by the finding that the farther a foster home is from its neighbors, the more likely it is to be "successful." When the correlations of a wide variety of the items related to "success" in these two separate groups of families were examined, there were significant differences in regard to a number of items. And since there is not a completely satisfactory occupational classification in which the relationship of "farming" to non-farm occupations is adequately represented, it seemed important to investigate fully these differences.

There were ten families among the total group of 102 in which the foster father was reported both to be a part-time farmer and to hold a wage earning job. In the interest of comparing relatively "pure" groups, these ten foster families were dropped from this particular comparison, as they would tend to dilute the picture of either group. Also, as mentioned earlier, it is necessary to exclude the six families in which there is no foster father from the multiple regression analysis. This means that 42 farm families are being compared with 44 non-farm families.

One by-product of this investigation was stimulated by the early impression that a larger proportion of the farm than non-farm families were rated as "successful" and that they also had a larger proportion of children with total scores (indicating "degree of disturbance") above the mean than below the mean. This suggested that the farm families were rated as doing better with more difficult children. But included in the non-farm families were these ten families which belong in neither group; when they were removed, this relationship all but disappeared. Obviously the numbers are too small to justify any statement except the possibility that this particular item (a father who is a part-time farmer with another job) may be a very useful predictor in the negative sense. It is easy to speculate as to possible reasons; the dual occupation may indicate the fathers are not as secure and "established" in their jobs, the families may be less secure economically and socially, and so on. All we can say is that this appears to be the kind of information one should be on the alert for.

The same factors and single items which were used in the multiple regression for the total group of families (Table 24) were utilized in the regressions for the non-farm and farm families. In each of these groups the multiple correlation reaches a distinctly higher level than for the total group (see Tables 25 and 26). It also increases much more rapidly; by the time 7 variables are entered, the multiple correlation for both farm and non-farm families is .82 or higher, indicating that two-thirds of the variance can be accounted for. Since the multiple correlation at step 15 is statistically significant in both groups even with the reduced numbers, it appears that the predictive items may be more powerful when used differentially for these two sub-groups. Just what the explanation for this may be we do not know; possibly it is related to the kinds of families in the farm and non-farm population who are attracted to foster care, or possibly to the subtle differences in the entire way of life of these two groups. Further study of this would seem essential, particularly because of the possibility that the utility of our findings might be considerably enhanced.

For non-farm families (Table 25) the best predictive item is the rating of the foster mother as a "good risk" in handling a withdrawn child. This rating is based primarily on evidence of the mother's sensitivity to such a child and her awareness that it would not be easy to "reach" such a child. Taken alone, this variable accounts for 27 percent of the variance. It is followed by one of the indications of teamwork, that is, whether each parent actively encourages the other in the foster parent role. This is followed by one of the ratings based on the semi-projective interviews--a rating which reflects both firmness in handling a child and parental skill--and by two factors based on other information from the hypothetical questions. One is the degree of confidence as expressed by the foster mother in regard to handling a withdrawn child (the more confident, the more successful), and the other includes both the degree of confidence and "good risk" attitudes expressed toward handling a stubborn child. It appears, then, that a large component of the best predictors to "success" of non-farm families consists

Table 25

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for Non-farm Families

Step Number	Variable Name	Multiple R	Multiple R^2	Percent of Variance Explained by Each Variable When Added
1	Factor IX-Foster mother a good risk with a withdrawn child	.5221	.2726	27.26%
2	Teamwork: foster parents' support of each other	.6164	.3799	10.74
3	FM answer to semi-projective story re: washing dishes	.6793	.4614	08.14
4	Factor II-confidence in handling a withdrawn child	.7174	.5147	05.33
5	Factor VI-handling a stubborn child	.7602	.5779	06.32
6	No. of foster parents' own children	.7893	.6231	04.52
7	Foster family economic level	.8226	.6767	05.37
8	No. of areas in which foster parents are autocratic	.8402	.7060	02.93
9	Foster mother's report that her parents were religious	.8515	.7251	01.91
10	Factor XIII-FM concern about her own children	.8639	.7464	02.13
11	Factor III-support from close friends and family	.8740	.7639	01.76
12	FM answer to semi-projective story re: broken toy	.8854	.7839	02.00
13	Factor V-FM natal: economic level, satisfaction of parents	.8915	.7948	01.09
14	Factor XVI-FM Att. Ques. total, FF Att. Ques. warmth, FM response to semi-projective story re: child's crying	.8996	.8093	01.45
15	Foster mother a good risk with a defiant child	.9056	.8201	01.08

Dependent variable = Family Success II

N = 44 families

Table 26

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors to Success for Farm Families

Step Number	Variable Name	Multiple R	Multiple R^2	Percent of Variance Explained by Each Variable When Added
1	Foster family economic level	.6556	.4298	42.98%
2	Foster mother a good risk with a defiant child	.7159	.5125	08.28
3	Factor XVI-FM Att. Ques. total, FF Att. Ques. warmth, FM response to semi-projective story re: child's crying	.7514	.5647	05.21
4	No. of foster parents' own children	.7767	.6033	03.86
5	Factor IX-Foster mother a good risk with a withdrawn child	.8094	.6551	05.19
6	Factor XI-FF natal: economic level, father gave reasons, parents affectionate	.8286	.6866	03.15
7	No. of areas in which foster parents are autocratic	.8433	.7112	02.46
8	Factor V-FM natal: economic level, satisfaction of parents	.8562	.7330	02.18
9	Foster mother's report that her parents were religious	.8649	.7480	01.50
10	Factor II-confidence in handling withdrawn child	.8700	.7569	00.89
11	Factor XX-FF natal: parents satisfied, and religious	.8776	.7702	01.34
12	Factor XVII-FM age, FF education, FM education	.8822	.7783	00.80
13	FF Attitude Questionnaire: "absence of helplessness"	.8883	.7891	01.08
14	Factor X-FF occupation and place of residence	.8920	.7956	00.65
15	FM answer to semi-projective story re: broken toy	.8952	.8013	00.57

Dependent variable = Family Success II

N = 42 families

of two parents who work well together and a mother who has both particular sensitivity to a withdrawn child as well as confidence in her ability to "reach" him, along with the ability to be firm in some situations. In addition to these, the number of own children a foster family has had, and their general economic level are also important.

In the multiple regression for farm families (Table 26) the first seven items include three that are also among the first seven for the non-farm group. However, the order is considerably different. For farm families, the outstanding single predictor appears to be the rating of economic level of the family, which alone accounts for 43 percent of the variance. It is followed by a number of items representing somewhat different aspects of the mother's child-rearing skill: a rating of the mother as a "good risk" in handling a defiant child (indicating she has some understanding of such behavior and is not greatly upset nor threatened by it), and Factor XVI which includes evidence both of a "child-centered" attitude on the part of the foster mother and of the foster father's warmth. Other evidence of the importance of the foster father's role in farm families is to be found in Factor XI; it indicates the father came from a family which was economically secure and in which his parents were affectionate toward him. And, again, the number of own children a foster family has had, the rating of the mother as a "good risk" with a withdrawn child, and a measure of teamwork (the number of areas in which the foster parents behave autocratically) are also among the first seven predictors for farm families.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have examined the possible utility of the items developed and identified as potential predictors when these items are combined in a multiple correlation and multiple regression analysis. The size of the multiple correlation obtained when only those variables which have some demonstrable validity are used is sufficiently large to indicate that further investigation and study of these variables and related items is eminently worthwhile. When factors are included along with single-item variables, a somewhat larger multiple correlation is obtained, suggesting that the use of factors may increase the efficiency of the predictors. The beta weights have not been reported for any of these items because to do so would give a false impression of greater accuracy than we think probably exists at the present time. The value of the multiple correlation is primarily in indicating that these items do seem to represent somewhat different dimensions, and that it would seem very worthwhile to continue investigation along these lines.

The discovery of an apparent difference between farm and non-farm families has led to a study of the usefulness of predictors for these two separate groups. This material is reported tentatively because of the small number of cases in each group, but in both sub-samples, certain predictors appear to be considerably more effective than they are for the total sample. Although we cannot be certain that these differences are replicable, they are sufficiently impressive to indicate the need for further study of these two separate groups of families.

Chapter X

FINDINGS FROM SEMI-PROJECTIVE INTERVIEWS WITH FOSTER MOTHERS AND FOSTER CHILDREN

Description of Methodology[34]

Although there is a wealth of research literature concerning parental behavior and its relationship to children's personality characteristics, few studies have gone beyond preliminary diagnostic evaluations or behavioral checklists filled out by the parents or teachers to obtain information about the child. This is particularly true in the child welfare field. Fanshel's extensive survey of the literature in this field does not reveal any study in which data were collected directly from the children themselves other than Weinstein's, which was a specific attempt to study the impact of placement upon the child's self-image and was restricted in scope to this one area.[35]

It seems most likely that the absence of such attempts may be attributed to the fear of disturbing the child unduly by any direct effort to gather data, and also to the reluctance to accept information given by the child without extensive checking against other sources. Neither of these difficulties can be ignored or minimized, and they must be taken into account in planning such a study. They impose certain limitations upon the methods which it is possible to use in eliciting information from foster children themselves, along with other difficulties inherent in such an attempt--such as the impossibility of using any such information as a factual report, not only because of the projection and distortion involved, but also because of the difficulty in determining which parent figure or figures are referred to.

Hence, when interest developed in the present research in studying the children themselves, it was essential to develop within these limitations a technique which would obtain maximal information about the children's perceptions of parental behavior, their expectations of parental behavior in specified situations, and certain of their personality characteristics without jeopardizing the trust of the parents nor disturbing the children. A semi-projective inventory consisting of brief stories to be completed was consequently developed. This technique has been employed successfully with children of all ages and even with adults, thus making it possible to obtain information from the foster parents on the same instrument. The most recent applications of the story completion technique have been in studies of moral development and in patterns of family interaction with normal and with disturbed children.[36]

---

[34] This section and the one on Content Analysis have been prepared by Stephen M. Pittel. Dan J. Peterman developed the categories used in the content analysis.

[35] David Fanshel. A review of child welfare research. Mimeo. 148 p.

E. A. Weinstein. The self-image of the foster child. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1960.

The stories selected were derived mainly from the descriptions given by the foster mothers of the most difficult behaviors presented by the foster child both in the Round I interview and in the written reports mailed in periodically by the foster mothers (the Weekly Behavior Report Forms). Care was taken to select stories which would be equally salient for middle and lower class children, for rural and urban children, for boys and girls, and for children in the 7 to 13 year age range.[37]

Since one of our major concerns was with the interaction of the child with parent figures, each of the stories involved some behavior on the part of a child which was either observed directly by both of his parents or which was brought to the attention of the parents by some other person.

The entire series was first presented to the child as incidents happening to "a boy" or "a girl" (a child of the same sex as the child being interviewed), and he was asked to "make up a story about what would happen next" (Part A). In Part B, the series was again presented and the child was asked to imagine himself in these same situations and to indicate how his foster parents would respond. A tape recording was made of the entire interaction. This entire technique was tried out first in a pilot study with 11 children known to be disturbed and living in a residential center, as well as with 17 children living in foster homes not included in the larger study.

---

[36] D. R. Miller and G. E. Swanson. Inner conflict and defense. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960.

A. Farina. Patterns of role dominance and conflict in parents of schizophrenic patients. J. abnorm. soc. psychol., 1960, 61, 31-38.
A. Farina and R. M. Dunham. Measurement of family relationships and their effect. Archives of general psychiatry, 1963, 9, 64-73.
A. Farina, N. Garmezy and E. H. Rodnick. The structured situational test: A method for studying family interaction in schizophrenia. Amer. J. orthoosychiatry., 1960, 30, 445-452.

[37] See Appendix I for a copy of the stories used.

The same set of stories were used to interview the foster mother. Each was presented as a story about "a child," and she was asked to tell "how such behavior would be handled" in her family. She was also asked to give alternative responses regarding handling boys and girls in each of these situations.

The collection of data by this technique comprised Round III of our study. Only three mothers were reported by the interviewers as showing somewhat negative feelings toward the intrusion of the study or the use of the tape recorder and two of thse appeared to change during the interview. Problems were encountered particularly with four children, three of whom could not finish the interview (one because of limited attention span, one because of an upset attributed to events earlier in the same day, and one apparently because of inability to respond--a very withdrawn child). A few of the younger children gave very minimal responses, and one with a speech difficulty produced a recording which could not be completely transcribed. On the whole, however, both the foster children and their foster mothers were very cooperative and responsive and there were no real problems in introducing the tape recorders or establishing rapport except for the few described above.

Analysis of the Data

Content Analysis

Three major considerations dictated the choice of content categories to be used in analyzing these stories: (a) that the variables be represented with sufficient frequency across all subjects to allow a statistical analysis of the data, (b) that each of the variables be psychologically meaningful within the context of this study and the previous literature on child-rearing and parent child relations, and (c) that no variable should require clinical judgment on the part of the coders. On this basis, nine content areas, each subdivided into more specific responses, were developed: attempts of child to avoid or defer punishment, attempts to "explain away" his behavior, methods and agents of punishment, the child's response to the punishment, the child's affective or self-evaluative reaction after being caught and/or punished, the source of the child's feeling about himself, the child's feeling toward his parents, the parent's feeling after the experience, and the parent's motivation for responding as he did.

Final scores on each of these categories were determined by two judges with reliability of at least .65; a third and even a fourth judge were used when needed in order to achieve this level. The scores were intercorrelated separately for boys and girls and for the combined sample, and the intercorrelation matrices subjected to a Tryon Key Cluster Analysis preset to continue cluster extraction by a communality exhaustion criterion (0.91999).

This analysis of the data from the boys yielded five variable clusters which may be briefly described as maternal discipline, paternal discipline, negativism, parental laxness, and strong internalization of conscience with primarily negative affective consequences. Analysis of the data from the girls yielded five interpretable clusters: maternal discipline, elements of parental discipline combined with denial and negativism on the part of the child, parental laxness, fear and denial, and absence of misbehavior.

Following this V (variable) analysis, cluster scores were assigned to each subject for the subsequent obverse or O analysis, in which subjects who most clearly resembled each other were grouped in clusters. The correlations of each child's cluster scores with these O clusters were transformed to the corresponding values of Fisher's z, which were then correlated with various pertinent data from the larger study. Although a few significant relationships were found, no systematic explanations for the grouping of children in these several clusters could be found, nor did the cluster scores show significant relationships with the "success" ratings.

Further work with this material is needed, focusing particularly on the content of the responses made by the children spontaneously before probes were introduced to elicit alternative stories. A summary of certain dimensions of parent behavior such as parent nurturance and parent punitiveness, as revealed in the stories of both children and foster mothers, would seem particularly appropriate, as well as some analysis of the congruence between the kinds of parental behavior described by children and their foster mothers. However, since such analysis will require considerably more time and effort, we have turned to a simpler kind of analysis for the present. It is described in the following section.

Development of Rating Scales

A first step toward developing another method of analysis was to determine whether the responses of the foster mothers to these stories could serve as an alternative indication of their "success" rating. We reasoned that if the technique is to be useful in identifying potentially "excellent" foster homes or homes that are currently functioning as "excellent," it should be possible to determine this from responses given by the foster mothers. An experimental tryout with a small number of protocols of foster mothers given global "success" ratings by the social workers of either "excellent" or "less than adequate" or "poor" indicated that when information elicited in response to four stories was taken as a whole, we could predict their "success" ratings in 14 out of 16 instances. On the basis of this experience it was decided to rate the responses to certain stories on a five-point rating scale according to the "excellence" of the parent-handling technique described. Four of the original eleven stories were selected as having yielded the most interpretable answers on the basis of (1) uniform interpretation by the foster mothers and children; i.e., whether the response to the story was from the same frame of reference for all respondents, (2) the closeness of the situation described in the story to the actual experiences of the respondents, and (3) the variety of situations represented by a group of stories chosen to represent the entire eleven stories. Each of these stories as presented to the respondents is given below, followed by a brief description of the criteria used in rating the responses given by both mothers and children.

1) One day a child is very angry with his brother. He deliberately breaks one of his brother's toys. That night his brother tells his foster parents what the child has done.

The highest rating on this story was given to responses describing prompt action on the part of the parents in making the child replace his brother's toy, either in kind or by money, along with some evidence of empathy for the child who broke the toy.

2) A child wants to go to the movies with his friends, but he has already spent all of his allowance money. He takes some money from his mother's purse to pay for the movies. That night at dinner the child tells his foster parents what he has done and says that he is sorry.

Unlike the other three stories, this one was rated twice--once on attitude of the foster parents toward the apology and once on handling the problem. The attitude which was given the highest rating was recognition of the child's confession as evidence that he had learned through his mistake and was genuinely sorry for it. The method of handling which was rated highest was either requiring repayment of the money by the child or taking no action if the parents felt the apology had been sincere. Since neither of these dimensions gives an accurate picture of the interaction involved in this story, the two separate ratings were summed to provide an overall rating for the story.

3) Even though a child knew he had to help with the dishes every night, one night he said he wouldn't do them.

The highest rating on this story was given to responses describing a firm but positive position on the part of the foster parent(s); that is, there had to be evidence that the mother was in control of the situation by insisting that the child help with the dishes, as well as evidence that she was using non-punitive methods.

4) One day a child went to his room and started to cry. When his foster parents asked him why he was crying, he said it was none of their business.

The responses given the highest rating on this story were those describing a mother who assured the child of her concern, love, and willingness to help him. The emphasis necessarily had to be placed on the child's welfare and happiness, and neither on the curiosity of the mother to find out what was bothering him nor on her specific reaction to the child's saying "none of your business." Evidence that the mother put pressure on the child to tell what was wrong would lower the rating.

Admittedly these criteria are limited to what was judged to be the most adequate child-handling technique--as described in both the mothers' and the children's stories. The principal uses to which these ratings have been put is to examine their relationship with each other and with the "success" ratings. A more specific analysis of the degree of congruence in the responses of a foster mother and her foster child and an analysis of the relationship of this to the "success" rating would be highly desirable.

In addition to these separate ratings of the children's answers to each story, an overall evaluation of his expectations of parental behavior was made on the basis of all four stories, with particular emphasis on the general quality of parental handling and the indication of parental sympathy and concern for the child. An overall rating of the foster mother's responses was obtained by adding together the scores of her four stories.

The raters of the interviews observed that the children ten years old and older seemed more able to respond to the situations and verbalize their reactions than the younger children and that the techniques considered to be the best for handling these situations might not be as generally applicable to the younger children. For example, a younger child might not have

3

the means of replacing his brother's toy. This reaction was reinforced by several significant correlations between child's age and the mother's "success" in handling the child's behaviors and by cross tabulations showing that many of the discrepancies between these ratings and the social worker's "success" ratings occurred in cases of younger children. For these reasons, the data have been analyzed for those children over nine and for the total group.

Use of Child's Responses as a Measure of Success

One of the principal purposes of this method of analysis was to determine whether or not the information provided by the child could be used as a measure of the "success" of the placement. Correlations of .32 between the Round II "success" and the ratings based on the children's stories and .43 when only the children at least ten years old were used, as well as other significant correlations with alternate success ratings shown in Table 27 indicate that the development of this technique for such evaluation is worthwhile. Cross-tabulations of these data show that, although many foster mothers judged "excellent" by the social workers (in their Round II "success" ratings) were given low ratings on the basis of their foster children's stories, it was extremely rare for a mother considered "poor" or even "less than adequate" by the social worker to be given a "good" or "excellent" rating on the basis of the child's stories.

The answers the children gave to these stories are further defined and supported by significant correlations with answers given by the mothers at the time of the Round II interview regarding how they would react to various problems. For example, those mothers rated high from the responses their foster children gave to the story regarding the child's breaking his brother's toy are the ones who (according to the Round II data) are concerned about their children's behavior rather than irritated by it (r = .35) and show a child-centered attitude both in reaction to the hypothetical question regarding the defiant child (r = .23) and on the Attitude Questionnaire.

This pattern of concern for the child himself is also evidenced in the low but significant relationship between the children's responses to the story in which the child takes his foster mother's money and the ratings of the mothers as concerned about their children's behavior (r = .24) and as a "good risk" with a defiant child (r = .22).

The success of the foster mother in handling the child who goes to his room crying is the only one of the four ratings significantly correlated with the child's degree of disturbance (r = .32), the direction suggesting that the least disturbed children describe better parental behavior. The

Table 27

Correlations between Various Measures of "Success" and the Ratings Made from the Foster Children's Responses to the Round III Stories

	Ratings based on stories								Overall rating	
	Breaking toy		Taking money		Washing dishes		Child crying			
Social workers' ratings:	Total Sample	Older Children	Total Sample	Older Children	Total Sample	Older Children	Total Sample	Older Children	Total Sample	Older Children
Foster Mother "success"	30^b	37^b	20^b	26^a	18	12	-04	00	32^b	43^b
Foster family "success"	30^b	34^b	15	18	22^a	14	-03	03	30^b	39^b
Foster parents take child's needs into account when handling him	27^b	38^b	24^b	35^b	14	07	-16	-15	30^b	38^b
Foster mother warmth	20^a	23	13	20	20^a	19	-17	-04	23^a	33^b
Foster parents sure in relating to children	02	05	22^a	33^b	16	19	00	-08	17	22
Foster home suitable	02	06	-06	-05	02	-05	04	09	09	16
Foster home meets child's needs	08	16	12	17	-06	-15	02	05	11	16
Foster mother secure	06	14	-08	-04	05	03	-10	-07	05	13
Foster parents' problem handling skill	21^a	38^b	18	20	26^b	24	-07	03	23^a	38^b
Foster parents' strictness	-21^a	-15	-22^a	-24	07	12	-09	00	-10	-02
Foster parents' consistency	18	18	01	07	05	-04	02	11	17	26^a
Foster parents adapt standards to child	15	18	16	22	14	13	02	07	20^a	27^a
Foster parents enforce their expectations	-01	-07	-15	-18	02	-03	02	-03	-04	-09

[a] Statistically significant at .05 level

[b] Statistically significant at .01 level

mothers rated most successful in dealing with this behavior also tend to be rated as a "good risk" with a withdrawn child.

Use of the Mothers' Responses as a Measure of Success

Although significant relationships are found in Table 28 between the child's responses and the mother's answers to only two stories--the ones regarding the taking of the money and the child's crying--the pattern of correlations with the various success measures is almost identical (see Table 29). This seems to indicate that the stories elicit similar dimensions from the foster mothers as from the children. Furthermore, the significant correlations between the ratings of the mothers on each story and the alternate success ratings (such as problem-handling skill, taking the child's needs into account) indicate that a type of success, though more limited in scope than that rated by the social worker, is being measured by this technique.

Table 28

Correlation Coefficients among Foster Mothers' and Foster Children's Responses to Stories in Round III

	Ratings based on Stories								Overall ratings	
Ratings based on stories:	Breaking toy FM	Breaking toy FC	Taking money FM	Taking money FC	Washing dishes FM	Washing dishes FC	Child crying FM	Child crying FC	Of FM responses	Of FC responses
Breaking toy										
Foster mother	--	12	14	00	19	15	16	09	72	20
Foster child		--	39	36	-05	28	16	13	27	69
Taking money										
Foster mother			--	25	05	-01	23	-02	55	32
Foster child				--	-17	-09	-05	01	04	48
Washing dishes										
Foster mother					--	-01	13	-06	56	-14
Foster child						--	11	16	11	50
Child crying										
Foster mother							--	28	53	18
Foster child								--	13	55
Overall ratings										
Of FM responses									--	27
Of FC responses										--

$r_{05} = .21$

$r_{01} = .26$

Table 29

Correlations between Various Measures of "Success" and the Ratings Made from the Foster Mothers' Responses to the Round III Stories

Social workers' ratings:	Ratings based on stories				Overall rating
	Breaking toy	Taking money	Washing dishes	Child crying	
Foster mother "success"	30[b]	17	03	13	26[b]
Foster family "success"	30[b]	14	01	08	23[a]
Foster parents take child's needs into account when handling him	17	20[a]	-06	12	14
Foster mother's warmth	-01	04	00	13	-01
Foster parents sure in relating to children	26[b]	-02	08	-14	12
Foster home suitable	29[b]	-06	02	08	14
Foster home meets child's needs	15	-09	12	11	12
Foster mother secure in role	19[a]	-03	33[b]	00	20[a]
Foster parents' problem handling skill	21[a]	-04	02	17	14
Foster parents' strictness	05	-08	-01	-09	-04
Foster parents' consistency	19[a]	-02	11	19[a]	18
Foster parents adapt standards to child	11	04	02	07	07
Foster parents enforce their expectations	25[b]	-03	10	-17	12

[a] Statistically significant at .05 level

[b] Statistically significant at .01 level

An examination of the relationship between the success ratings and the responses to the separate stories given by children (Table 27) and by mothers (Table 29) reveals that the responses to the "breaking of a toy" are more consistently correlated with success ratings than any of the others. One explanation for this would seem to be the "unidimensional" nature of this story, whereas in the story about "taking money" there are two stimuli which elicit responses--the theft of the money and the later apology--and in the story of the "child crying", both the child's crying alone and his telling the parents it is "none of their business" elicit responses.

Use of the Mothers' Responses as a Predictor to "Success"

The relationship of these ratings of the mothers' responses to the stories with other predictors to "success" was also examined. The significant contribution of Factor XVI, which includes the rating based on the story of the child's crying, in the multiple regression of the predictors to success suggests that this may be a useful tool at the time of intake study. Further support is found in the significant correlation of all of the ratings based on the stories with the foster mother's score on the Attitude Questionnaire. In addition, each rating correlates significantly with at least one other predictor to success.

Summary and Recommendations for Future Use of This Technique

Our experience with the use of the story completion technique in obtaining information directly from foster children as well as from their foster mothers indicates that this is an entirely feasible method insofar as data collection is concerned. Analysis of the data obtained presents numerous problems, but our experience in using rating scales of only one dimension, the "adequacy" of the parent behavior described, indicates that ratings based on either the child's responses or the mother's responses correlate significantly with the global "success" ratings as well as with numerous other cognate success ratings. This technique would seem useful in evaluating the success of a placement as well as in the selection of foster parents. However, thus far we have completed only a very limited exploration of the methods of analyzing the responses and much work on the refinement of the instrument as well as on developing methods of analysis remains to be done.

At this stage a number of suggestions regarding the kind of story which is suitable for this use may be made: incidents which are within the actual experience of almost every one of the children to be studied are preferable, and the incidents should be "unidimensional" so that responses are elicited to only one kind of behavior on the part of the child, such as the expression of anger, or theft, or an apology.

It appears that a combination of this technique with the hypothetical behavior problems described in the Round II interviews with the foster mothers might be particularly useful. This would involve descriptions in stories of the particular kinds of behavior to which we want to elicit reactions, and tape-recorded answers would provide a more complete set of data than is obtained by interviewer recording.

One of the major problems in placing a disturbed child in a foster home is in attempting to "match" the child's particular needs with the special skills of the foster parents. Although in the present study an attempt was made to obtain information relevant to this problem, we have had very limited success, possibly becuase of the difficulties in identifying sufficient numbers of children with similar behavior "syndromes."[38] There now seems more merit in focusing on specific behaviors and in collecting information regarding the skills of foster parents in coping with these specific behaviors. For this purpose, the story completion technique would seem to be highly appropriate and very promising.

---

[38] See Appendix J, Differences between "Successful" Parents Caring for Different Kinds of Disturbed Children.

Chapter XI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study our primary goal has been two-fold, first to develop an understanding of some of the characteristics of foster families caring for "disturbed" children which differentiate those who are "relatively successful" from those who are "relatively unsuccessful." Once this understanding is reached, the second goal is to identify ways in which these characteristics can be included as part of an intake study of foster parent applicants and can be used to differentiate those who are likely to be "successful" from those who are unlikely to be.

Obviously this is a large task in such a complex field, particularly when even the terms used to describe the goals intended first require definition and then reduction to a set of constructs which can be studied quantitatively and measured.

One of the terms which had to be defined before we could even specify the population of the study was that of a "disturbed" child. To meet this need, we settled upon a rating schedule (the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule) by means of which the child's observable behavior is rated by the professional person who knows him (the social worker) according to the frequency of occurrence of the various behavior items. This is of course only one of many ways in which the child's behavior may be viewed and evaluated, and although the particular schedule used has served the needs of this study adequately, there is at the same time a continuing need for a much more complete conceptual scheme within which the on-going behaviors, the underlying needs, and the developmental potential of children may be described with reasonable accuracy at any point in time. If such a scheme were readily available--and there is no doubt that considerable work in the child development area is bringing us closer to one--we would be in a much better position to evaluate changes in the child during this period of foster home care.

Possibly the knottiest problem which faced us in planning this study was the definition of the "success" of a foster home placement. This is clearly a complex question, and one which has been only partially answered even as of now. It appeared that the only source of an evaluation of the "success" of a foster home was the caseworker supervising the placement, although it was at the same time recognized that such evaluations would be somewhat limited and also open to some skepticism. It was also recognized that the foster home care of an extremely difficult child might be evaluated differently than the care of a child who did not present as difficult behavior for the foster parents to cope with. Hence the question used to elicit the evaluation of the placement reminded the worker of the "goals" of the placement and asked the worker to indicate how well the foster parents were fulfilling their task within this frame of reference. Subsequent study has indicated that this rating is on the whole highly reliable and relatively stable over a period of about seven months. Considerable additional analysis, based on a variety of other evaluative questions asked the social workers at these two different points in time, indicates that approximately half the variance in the success rating may be explained by the variation in the foster parents' "skill in handling the child's major problems." Beyond this, much smaller proportions of the variance may be explained by the foster parents' ability to respond to the child's particular needs, and to a lesser extent to their consistency and firmness in handling him and to their confidence or security in the parental role.

Ideally, it would have been desirable to reach this degree of understanding of the "success" rating before going on to collect information from the foster parents which might lead to further understanding of their behavior and also to the development of predictive items which could conceivably be gathered at the time of intake study. However, possibly unfortunately, the data-gathering was not planned with this sequence in mind, and information was gathered in interviews with both foster parents at the same time it was obtained from the social workers. Therefore, we had to use our "best guesses" as to the varieties of information to sample.

From a fairly extensive analysis of the various kinds of information obtained from the foster parents, concentrating particularly on the items of information which could be asked of applicants at the time of intake study, we have identified a number of items and factors which show statistically significant, although relatively low, correlations with the family "success" rating. And, having established to a reasonable extent the validity of this global rating, as well as its reliability, it seemed reasonable to try out the combination of these various items and factors to see how good a prediction could be made of the global success rating. The use of the multiple correlation and multiple regression technique indicates that slightly more than half the variance in the success rating may be accounted for by these items. Although this is not a sufficiently high level of prediction to enable us to feel any great degree of certainty that these measures are adequate, other try-outs of multiple correlation suggest that it may be possible to develop considerably better predictors through further study of some of these items, refinements of them, development of related techniques, and use of farm and non-farm sub-samples. At this point, the findings must be regarded as far more exploratory than final, in the sense that they point to areas in which further work seems very justified and desirable.

At the same time that we seem justified in concluding that we may well be on the right track in regard to identifying predictors to "success," it also seems important to recommend work in two related directions: First, it would seem highly desirable to develop other ways of assessing the success of a foster home placement than placing entire reliance upon the judgment of social workers. It would be desirable to have other kinds of more objective measures which would serve as evidence of "success." The primary and most obvious one of course is improvement in the child himself. This brings us to the second area in which further work seems essential. We need far more precise ways of assessing the child's behavior and changes in it over time. On the one hand, this seems a not-too-difficult problem from the point of view of studying child development, but when the complexities of a foster child's prior experiences are considered, including for example the effects of extreme neglect, abuse, rejection and the like, coupled with the upsetting effects of having natural family members continue contact with him even though there is little likelihood that he will be reunited with them, and the confusion in the self-image of the child, along with possible attendant effects of these conflicts upon the child's ability to learn in school and to adapt to new situations, it is clear that very complex problems are involved in trying to assess change in a foster child's behavior over time. Work in regard to this problem is very much needed.

APPENDICES

Appendix — Page

A Description of Procedure by Which the Sample of Foster Children was Selected A1

Methodological Analysis of Behavior Ratings Made by Social Workers and Foster Mothers on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule A5
Factor Loadings A6
Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule A12

B Major Problem Behaviors of the Child as Described in Interviews by Social Workers and Foster Mothers A15

Code Used for the Detailed Classification of the Child's Problem Behavior as Described in the Round II Interviews A16

C The Teacher Questionnaire A21

Teacher Questionnaire Form A29

D Descriptions of Seven Children Who Were Placed in Their Present Foster Home Before Their Second Birthday A33

E Reliability A37

F Attitude Questionnaire A51

G Interview Schedules A55

Social Worker, Round I A55
Foster Mother, Round I A63
Social Worker, Round II A72
Foster Mother, Round II A80

H Results of Factor Analysis of Potential Predictors to Success . . A87

I Stories Presented to Foster Mothers and Foster Children for Completion A91

J Differences Between Successful Parents Caring for Different Kinds of Disturbed Children A93

Evidence of Differentiation among Foster Mothers in Their Responses to the Hypothetical Questions A93
Characteristics of Foster Families Caring for Children Showing Different Kinds of Problem Behavior A96
A Comparison of Foster Families Caring for "More Disturbed" Children with Those Caring for the "Less Disturbed" A99

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 1	Initial Screening of White Children Between Six and Thirteen Years of Age Living in Foster Homes under DCY Supervision in April 1964	A1
Table 2	Reasons for Non-Return of Behavior Rating Schedules from Social Workers . . .	A2
Table 3	Distribution of Scores in Three Factor Clusters	A3
Table 4	Children Selected According to Cluster Score Patterns	A4
Table 5	Criteria for Inclusion of Additional Subjects in the Study.	A4
Table 6	Reasons for Eliminating Children from the Sample.	A5
Table 7	Factors in Teacher Questionnaire	A24
Table 8	Median Correlation Coefficients for Items in Factors on Round I Teacher Questionnaire.	A26
Table 9	Correlation Coefficients Between Descriptions of the Children by Teachers and by Social Workers (Round I) Using Factors Obtained from Two Different Schedules.	A27
Table 10	Correlation Coefficients Showing Agreement Between Two Sets of Teachers' Ratings. . .	A28
Table 11	Comparison of Classification of Children from Social Worker and Teacher Schedules .	A28
Table 12	Decision Rules for Evaluation of Item Reliability.	A38
Table 13	Reliability Coefficients for Questions in Social Worker Interviews.	A40
Table 14	Relationship Between Social Worker's Degree of Familiarity with Foster Parents and Discrepant Answers Given in Reliability Interviews	A47
Table 15	Foster Mothers' Selection of "Easiest" and "Hardest" Problems among the Six Hypothetical Problems.	A95
Table 16	Correlations Describing Two Groups of Foster Mothers, as Evaluated by Social Workers and on the Basis of Their Own Answers to Hypothetical Behavior Problems. .	A98

APPENDIX A

USE OF THE CHILD BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS SCHEDULE

Description of Procedure by Which the Sample of Foster Children Was Selected

The total population from which the sample of children for this study was drawn consisted of all white children between the ages of six and thirteen living in foster homes under the primary care of the State Department of Public Welfare in Wisconsin. This number totaled 403 as of December 1, 1963, and at the time the screening was carried out by the District Offices of the Division for Children and Youth during the month of April 1964, the number was brought up to date by including all new cases placed in foster home care during the intervening period from December 1 through March 15, 1964. Age eligibility was determined by each child's age as of December 1, 1963.

In the initial screening the District Offices were asked to identify all children in this group who were known to be (a) mentally retarded, defined as functioning at an IQ level below 70, (b) severely physically handicapped, defined in terms of multiple handicaps, (c) organically brain-damaged, established through a neurological examination, or (d) in short-term custody of the state, defined as expected custody of less than two years. After these children were identified by the Districts, a group of 289 remained for further study (see Table 1).

Table 1

Initial Screening of White Children Between Six and Thirteen Years of Age Living in Foster Homes under DCY Supervision in April 1964

Total number of children (white, between six and thirteen years of age) living in foster homes under DCY supervision as of December 1, 1963		403
Number added to foster care up to March 15, 1964		26
Screening eliminated children for these reasons:		
Case was closed during period from December 1, 1963, through March 15, 1964	6	
Child was moved out of the state	4	
Child was moved to parent's home	18	
Child was moved to relative's home	12	
Child was placed in adoptive home	27	
Child was living in group home	3	
Child was in treatment institution	3	
Child is mentally retarded	23	
Child has organic brain damage or disease	18	
Child is mentally retarded and has organic brain damage	9	
Child has severe physical handicap	2	
Child is non-white	1	
Child is in short-term custody	14	
Total eliminated	140	
Total remaining for further screening		289

In order to select the most "disturbed" children out of this number, the social workers responsible for supervising each placement were asked to rate each child on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule. Behavior ratings were returned for 258 children. Reasons for non-return are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Reasons for Non-return of Behavior Rating Schedules from Social Workers

Children subsequently found to be ineligible	
Primary care provided by another agency	6
Living in relative's home	1
Mentally retarded	3
Mentally retarded and brain-damaged	1
Living in a group home	1
Over age limit	1
Children not sufficiently well known to be rated by anyone currently on the agency staff	18
Total	31

The data from the 258 questionnaires were first factor analyzed by means of a principal components factor analytic procedure (BIMD 17), in order to determine first of all whether factors similar to those found in earlier studies with this Schedule would appear. This was particularly important since six out of the original seventy items had been replaced with items describing varieties of withdrawn behavior.[1] From the analyses it appeared that the six additional items were all very highly correlated with the "lack of affection" factor and that their inclusion or non-inclusion would not change the picture significantly. Factors identical with those found in the original study appeared in these data also, indicating that the same factor structure could be used in describing this population of foster children.

---

[1] This content change was made because of our particular interest in identifying withdrawn children as contrasted with aggressive, acting-out children. In the research conducted by Borgatta and Fanshel up to this point, no cluster of "withdrawn" behavior was identified, although one item, "Is socially withdrawn," occurred as central to Factor IV, Lack of Affection. The six items which were added are the following: 16. Avoids contact with peers; 27. Avoids new social experience; 34. Avoids ordinary social contacts; 36. Avoids intimate family relations; 47. Resists attempts of others to be friendly; 59. Resists talking about own feelings. Examination of these items will indicate an attempt was made to add breadth with regard to reference to others, and also a built-in distinction was included between withdrawal in the sense of absence of initiative on the part of the respondent and rejection of the attempts of others to involve the respondent in social interaction. These six items were added to the schedule without changing the format, replacing six items which appeared to have been least informative in the prior study.

However, one of the primary needs in this study was not only to select those children who could be considered most "disturbed," but to select groups of children with clear-cut patterns or "syndromes" of behavior so that information regarding the characteristics of their foster care could be related to the particular kinds of behavior which they presented. In order to serve this need, a "second order" factor analysis was carried out, and three clusters or groups of factors were identified:

Cluster A. Factor I (defiance) was highly correlated positively with Factor II (unsocialized or psychopathic behavior). This could be described as "Defiant, unsocialized behavior."

Cluster B. Factor III (tension and anxiety) was highly correlated positively with Factor IV (lack of affection or unresponsiveness) and also with Factor V (infantile or dependent behavior). This cluster could be described as "Tense, anxious, infantile and unresponsive behavior."

Cluster C. Factor XII (responsibility) was correlated negatively with Factors IX (lack of ability to learn) and X (lack of motivation to learn). Factors IX and X were highly correlated positively with each other. This cluster might be described as "Lack of responsibility, motivation, and ability to learn."

Each child's scores on items contributing to each of these clusters were summed, distributions made for each cluster, and all scores which were one standard deviation or more above the mean were labeled "very high". The scores which clustered around the means were considered the "middle" scores, and the remainder the "low" scores. The intermediate group between the "middle" and "very high" were designated "high" (see Table 3).

Table 3

Distribution of Scores in Three Factor Clusters

	Factor Clusters					
	A Factors I & II		B Factors III, IV & V		C Factors IX, X & XII	
	Scores	%	Scores	%	Scores	%
Very high	34-52	16%	38-51	14%	34-49	17%
High	29-33	18%	33-37	19%	30-33	19%
Sub-total. . .		34%		33%		36%
Middle	24-28	26%	28-32	24%	26-29	20%
Low	12-23	40%	12-27	43%	10-25	44%
Mean.	26.4		29.4		26.8	
Standard Deviation. . . .	7.7		7.3		7.4	

In classifying children according to their patterns of scores on these three clusters, our primary interest was to find children who had "substantially higher" scores on one cluster than on the other two. "Substantially higher" was defined as two or more steps above the score on another cluster. For example a "high" score was regarded as "substantially higher" than a "low" score on another cluster. However, since an insufficient number of such "pure" cases could be found, the decision was made to keep Cluster A and Cluster B distinct or "pure" from each other, but to permit overlap of either of these with Cluster C. In addition, a group of children with high scores on all three clusters was identified. A total of 99 children were selected in this way (see Table 4).

Table 4

Children Selected According to Cluster Score Patterns

	Number of Children
Very high or high scores on all three clusters	36
Substantially higher score on Cluster A than B, regardless of score on Cluster C	25
Substantially higher score on Cluster B than A, regardless of score on Cluster C	24
Substantially higher score on Cluster C than any of the others	14
Total number of children	99

Since this procedure eliminated all subjects who did not show a clear pattern or syndrome of "disturbed" behavior and did not include as large a sample of children as desired, all of the remaining subjects were screened and included if any of the criteria indicated in Table 5 were met.

Table 5

Criteria for Inclusion of Additional Subjects in the Study

	Number of Children
One or more high or very high scores on any cluster, regardless of relationship with scores on other clusters	39
A record of having been studied at The Wisconsin Diagnostic Center at one time	2
Described as "disturbed" by the Districts as part of the initial screening, although obtaining no high scores on any cluster	6
Described as "disturbed" in the report of earlier psychological evaluation, although obtaining no high scores on any clusters	14
Total number of children	61

A total of 160 children was selected for further study by these two procedures. Subsequently 28 of these were dropped for the reasons shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Reasons for Eliminating Children from the Sample

	Number of Children
Had been moved to relative's home	2
Had been placed in adoptive home	2
Were found to be over age	1
Were found to be deaf	1
Had at least one sibling in same foster home who was being studied	5
All with siblings in foster homes: dropped for administrative reasons because of overweighting of sample in one district	17
Number of children dropped	28

At the time the sample of children was selected in late May 1964, a total of 132 children were included in the study. Prior to the beginning of the interviews in July 1964, five more were dropped from the sample, two because of removal from foster home placement and three because they were subsequently found to be ineligible.

Methodological Analysis of Behavior Ratings Made by Social Workers and Foster Mothers on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule

The Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule, with slight modification in wording to make it more readily understandable, was also used to obtain ratings from the foster mothers during the Round I interview. The interviewers read the items aloud to the foster mothers and checked their responses. In comparing the responses made by the social workers and foster mothers, it was important to determine whether similar factors would emerge from both sets of data so that they could be regarded as reasonably comparable. Consequently both sets of data were factor analyzed, utilizing the principal components method of factor analysis, using the square of the multiple correlation coefficient in the main diagonal, with varimax rotation. The first fifteen factors, which included 88 and 78 percent of the total extracted variance in the social worker and foster mother data, were retained for rotation. Subsequently, only thirteen factors for each set of data were judged to be interpretable. The discussion of the factor loadings is available in a technical paper[2], but the factor loadings for each factor are shown on the following pages. Detailed loadings are presented for a large number of items as they differ for the social workers and foster mothers.

---

[2] Edgar F. Borgatta and Patricia W. Cautley, Behavioral Characteristics of Children: Replication Studies with Foster Children. In press, 1966.

Appendix A

Factor I. Defiance

Variable Number	Item	Loadings Social Workers	 Foster Mothers
67 *	Is defiant	.75	.75
9	Is defiant	.71	.67
40 *	Is rebellious	.71	.74
50 *	Resists parental authority	.70	.46
55	Is resistant	.70	**
65 *	Shouts at parents	.55	.46
52	Has temper tantrums	.52	.70
32 *	Is antagonistic towards others	.51	.65
24	Speaks disrespectfully of parents	.49	.19
69	Is sullen or surly	.44	.34
25	Is rough or unruly	.38	.41
8	Tells lies	.36	.09
10	Bullies other children	.35	.68
38	Is authoritarian	.35	.57
58	Attacks other children	.35	.42
31	Is reckless	.34	.29
1	Is assertive	.33	.36
5	Is pleasant	-.33	-.54
60	Steals	.33	.17
56	Commits vandalism, destroys property	.32	.25
3	Is demanding of attention from others	.31	.33
42	Shows lack of affection	.31	.05
61	Is sour in his social relations	.23	.61
15	Is overly emotional	.27	.60
20	Gets upset easily	.22	.48
49	Is likeable	-.16	-.39
4	Is rational and logical	-.15	-.39
12	Is rigid in habits	.08	.38
53	Is conscientious	-.25	-.34
44	Is very tense	.17	.30

---

* Item in score.

** Item not included in the form.

Factor II. Unsocialized

		Loadings	
Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
18 *	Is dangerously daring	.74	.75
39 *	Risks self harm without apparent concern	.72	.84
31 *	Is reckless	.66	.65
25 *	Is rough or unruly	.60	.46
68 *	Does not show fear when it is appropriate	.45	.51
10	Bullies other children	.36	.20
29 *	Seems to enjoy being physically hurt	.33	00
58	Attacks other children	.32	.14
32	Is antagonistic towards others	.31	.15
56 *	Commits vandalism, destroys property	.27	.36
38	Is authoritarian	.08	.30

* Item in score. Two items, 45, "Mutilates self," and 57, "Talks of suicide or hurting self," did not occur with substantial loadings in these data.

Factor IIa. Self Destructive

		Loadings	
Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
57	Talks of suicide or hurting self	---	.74
45	Mutilates self	---	.70
64	Is prim and prissy	---	.59
70	Has night terrors or nightmares	---	.49

Appendix A

Factor III. Tension-Anxiety

		Loadings	
Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
33 *	Is overly anxious	.73	.74
14 *	Is fearful, anxious	.70	.46
44 *	Is very tense	.68	.71
15 *	Is overly emotional	.62	.29
20 *	Gets upset easily	.59	.61
46	Clings to adults dependently	.58	.11
62	Acts juvenile or babyish	.44	.24
70	Has night terrors or nightmares	.40	.26
3	Is demanding of attention from others	.37	.03
43	Over-reacts to minor illness, pain	.35	00
28	Has difficulty in learning things	.34	.10
34 N	Avoids ordinary social contacts	.31	.15
11	Masturbates or plays with self	.24	.38

Factor IV. Withdrawal (Lack of Affection A)

Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
22 *	Is socially withdrawn	.78	.68
34 N	Avoids ordinary social contacts	.72	.71
16 N	Avoids contact with peers	.67	.21
27 N	Avoids new social experience	.67	.59
61	Is sour in his social relations	.64	.16
42 *	Shows lack of affection	.61	.24
47 N	Resists attempts of others to be friendly	.61	.69
13 *	Appears incapable of showing love	.57	.31
36 N	Avoids intimate family relations	.55	.27
19	Is friendly	-.50	-.67
44	Is very tense	.36	.09
59 N	Resists talking about own feelings	.34	.34
69	Is sullen or surly	.34	.17
70	Has night terrors or nightmares	.30	.02
5	Is pleasant	-.27	-.34

* Item in score. Item 55, "Is resistant," also is in the score, but was omitted from Foster Mother form.

N New Item

Factor IVa. Lack of Affection B

Variable Number	Item	Loadings	
		Social Workers	Foster Mothers
13 *	Appears incapable of showing love	.36	.72
29	Seems to enjoy being physically hurt	.33	.21
42 *	Shows lack of affection	.33	.82
36 N	Avoids intimate family relations	.28	.72
47 N	Resists attempts of others to be friendly	.05	.32

Factor V. Infantilism

46 *	Clings to adults dependently	---	.60
59 N	Resists talking about own feelings	---	.49
58	Attacks other children	---	.36
62 *	Acts juvenile or babyish	---	.30

* Item in score. Item 43, "Over-reacts to minor illness, pains," did not occur in this factor.

Factor VI. Over-cleanliness

6 *	Is excessively neat	.79	.58
54 *	Is overconcerned with cleanliness	.74	.63
12 *	Is rigid in habits	.56	.11
64 *	Is prim or prissy	.55	.31

Factor VII. Sex Precociousness

48 *	Tries to involve others in sex play	.83	.85
21 *	Engages in sex play with others	.80	.86
37 *	Is sexually forward or precocious	.70	.55
11 *	Masturbates or plays with self	.59	.15
45	Mutilates self	.38	-.02
2	Shows fear in sex matters	.33	.09
29	Seems to enjoy being physically hurt	.33	-.04
57	Talks of suicide or hurting self	.32	-.04

* Item in score.

N New Item

Appendix A

Factor VIII. Sex Inhibition

Variable Number	Item	Loadings Social Workers	 Foster Mothers
30 *	Is inhibited in normal sex exposure (e.g., bathroom, showers)	.54	.20
2 *	Shows fear in sex matters	.42	.56
29	Seems to enjoy being physically hurt	.19	.62
11	Masturbates or plays with self	.23	.57
49	Is likeable	-.08	-.33
3	Is demanding of attention from others	-.06	.32

Factor IX. Learning Difficulty A

Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
51 *	Does not read well for his age	.38	.70
46	Clings to adults dependently	-.32	.06
28 *	Has difficulty in learning things	.30	.58
27 N	Avoids new social experience	.01	.36
1	Is assertive	.05	-.30

Factor XI. Likeability

Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
5 *	Is pleasant	.70	---
49 *	Is likeable	.67	---
19 *	Is friendly	.61	---
4	Is rational and logical	.42	---

* Item in score.

N New Item

Factor XII. Responsibility

		Loadings	
Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
66 *	Pays attention to the task at hand	.72	.82
17 B	Is slow in getting things done	-.71	-.72
63 B	Is apparently unmotivated to do anything	-.71	-.59
41 *	Is interested in getting things done	.68	.82
53 *	Is conscientious	.66	.62
7 B	Is lethargic or lazy	-.62	-.53
35 B	Gets distracted easily	-.62	-.57
28 A	Has difficulty in learning things	-.59	-.42
23 *	Accepts responsibility	.57	.57
51 A	Does not read well for his age	-.54	-.32
62	Acts juvenile or babyish	-.49	-.53
4	Is rational and logical	.37	.51
3	Is demanding of attention from others	-.34	-.22
50	Resists parental authority	-.19	-.40
12	Is rigid in habits	.12	-.35
58	Attacks other children	-.15	.30

A See score IX.

B On a previous analysis in Factor X

Factor XIII. Lies and Steals

Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
60	Steals	.56	.52
56	Commits vandalism, destroys property	.50	.45
8	Tells lies	.45	.56
50	Resists parental authority	.06	.42
30	Is inhibited in normal sex exposure	.12	.40
16 N	Avoids contact with peers	.02	-.38
67	Is defiant	.11	.30

Factor XIV. Assertiveness

Variable Number	Item	Social Workers	Foster Mothers
26	Does most of the talking in a group	.67	---
38	Is authoritarian	.55	---
1	Is assertive	.54	---
43	Over-reacts to minor illness, pains	.41	---
10	Bullies other children	.39	---
3	Is demanding of attention from others	.38	---

RATING FORM USED TO OBTAIN SOCIAL WORKERS' RATINGS OF CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

A STUDY OF CHILD BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS

Dr. David Fanshel, Research Director
Child Welfare League of America, Inc.

Dr. Edgar F. Borgatta
University of Wisconsin

Child's name or code identification____

Sex of child: Male_____
Female_____

Age of child:_____

INSTRUCTIONS

Each of the items listed is to be rated for this child. Place a mark in the column that best described the frequency of occurrence of each behavior for the child.

Some of the concepts in this checklist overlap. The list is based on prior study and is specifically designed to be inclusive of as many types of behavior as possible. To facilitate communication among professions, wherever possible common rather than technical words have been used to describe the behaviors involved.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. Is assertive					
2. Shows fear in sex matters					
3. Is demanding of attention from others					
4. Is rational and logical					
5. Is pleasant					
6. Is excessively neat					
7. Is lethargic or lazy					
8. Tells lies					
9. Is defiant					
10. Bullies other children					
11. Masturbates or plays with self					
12. Is rigid in habits					
13. Appears incapable of showing love					
14. Is fearful, anxious					
15. Is overly emotional					
16. Avoids contact with peers					
17. Is slow in getting things done					
18. Is dangerously daring					
19. Is friendly					
20. Gets upset easily					
21. Engages in sex play with others					
22. Is socially withdrawn					
23. Accepts responsibilities					
24. Speaks disrespectfully of parents					
25. Is rough or unruly					
26. Does most of the talking in a group					
27. Avoids new social experience					

	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Often	Almost Always
28. Has difficulty in learning things					
29. Seems to enjoy being physically hurt					
30. Is inhibited in normal sex exposure (e.g., bathroom, showers)					
31. Is reckless					
32. Is antagonistic towards others					
33. Is overly nervous					
34. Avoids ordinary social contacts					
35. Gets distracted easily					
36. Avoids intimate family relations					
37. Is sexually forward or precocious					
38. Is authoritarian					
39. Risks self harm without apparent concern					
40. Is rebellious					
41. Is interested in getting things done					
42. Shows lack of affection					
43. Over-reacts to minor illness, pains					
44. Is very tense					
45. Mutilates self					
46. Clings to adults dependently					
47. Resists attempts of others to be friendly					
48. Tries to involve others in sex play					
49. Is likeable					
50. Resists parental authority					
51. Does not read well for his age					
52. Has temper tantrums					
53. Is conscientious					
54. Is overconcerned with cleanliness					
55. Is resistant					
56. Commits vandalism, destroys property					
57. Talks of suicide or hurting self					
58. Attacks other children					
59. Resists talking about own feelings					
60. Steals					
61. Is sour in his social relations					
62. Acts juvenile or babyish					
63. Is apparently unmotivated to do anything					
64. Is prim or prissy					
65. Shouts at parents					
66. Pays attention to the task at hand					
67. Is defiant					
68. Does not show fear when it is appropriate					
69. Is sullen or surly					
70. Has night terrors or nightmares					

APPENDIX B

MAJOR PROBLEM BEHAVIORS OF THE CHILD AS DESCRIBED IN INTERVIEWS BY SOCIAL WORKERS AND FOSTER MOTHERS

Technique Used in Rating the Major Problem Behaviors of the Child as Defined by the Three Clusters on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule

One of the techniques used to check the validity of the behavior categorization of the children based on the cluster analysis of the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule was a behavior rating limited to the content of the four interviews, two with social workers and two with foster mothers, and based primarily on the description of the child's major problems given in these interviews. For this specific purpose -- to see if the child would be placed in the same category of behavior on the basis of the interview information as he was by the Cluster Score pattern on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule -- it was necessary for the raters to have a description of the kind of behavior defined by each cluster score. These descriptions follow:

Cluster A: Defiant

The defiant child is one described characteristically by the social worker and/or foster mother as being overly antagonistic toward others and himself. This antagonism may be evidenced by his rebellion against authority, often shouting and sassing his parents or refusing stubbornly to do as he is expected to do. He may lie even when the lie seemingly does not benefit him in any way. In interaction with his peers, including siblings, he is typically bossy, domineering (or attempting to be), and pugilistic. A common complaint against him is that he picks on smaller children or cannot play with any other children without getting into a fight if he does not get his way. He generally shows little respect toward the property of others in general, a characteristic often displayed by stealing or mutilation of material objects. Nor does the stereotype of the defiant child have much concern for his own physical safety--being reckless and rough, taking unnecessary chances of hurting himself, as well as actually mutilating himself, and even talking of suicide. Although no one child can probably be found who displays all these characteristics, many of these traits can be found together among children with similar emotional problems.

Cluster B: Tense-anxious

The tense-anxious child is one who shows undue tension or anxiety in his everyday activities, possibly revealing this in his inability to handle frustrations and his tendency to become easily upset or overly emotional. Or he may reveal it in his lack of confidence which can leave him anxious about the present and fearful of the future, even though many of his fears may be unfounded. The tense-anxious child may show an inability or a lack of desire to interact socially with others. Even within the familiar surroundings of the foster home, this child seems to be unable to show affection or any other indication of love, appearing to be uninterested in becoming a part of the family. He may revert to immature behavior, still clinging to adults to cope with his problems, which he seems unable to handle. His immaturity may at times be expressed in babyishness, such as thumb-sucking, and his reaction to any minor illness may be proportionately far more severe than the actual pain he experiences. Children are considered tense-anxious and put into this cluster if their behavior problems are more closely related to these items than to any others, regardless of the fact that no one child is likely to be described exclusively and inclusively in these terms.

Cluster C: Slow

Children in the Slow cluster typically show slowness or even inability to perform tasks, both at home and at school. For example, the slow child often is retarded in his academic progress (especially reading) and continues to have difficulty with his school work. At home he may also be slow to learn both manual skills and behavior patterns and he is careless with his possessions; but unlike the defiant child, his ineptness does not appear to be related to actual resistance to authority. His teachers and parents may complain that he is lethargic or lazy, unwilling to accept responsibility, and seldom conscientious about undertakings. Related to these characteristics is the seeming lack of motivation or interest in accomplishing anything. When working at a task, the slow child is frequently seen as becoming easily distracted and inattentive. As has been true of the two previous descriptions, these behavior problems do not necessarily describe a specific child, but rather the range of problems of the "slow" child.

The two persons doing the rating were unfamiliar with the children and worked independently. Each child was rated as to (a) which cluster or clusters his behavior would seem to match, and (b) the relative severity of his behavior. The two raters showed an initial agreement on 81 percent of the ratings of the children's behavior and resolved all differences in a joint decision. The results of the categorization are presented in Chapter III.

Code Used for the Detailed Classification of the Child's Problem Behavior as Described in the Round II Interviews

In the Round II Interview, the social workers and foster mothers were each asked to list the "main problems or difficult kinds of behavior" shown by the foster child at the present time. Following this listing, a detailed series of questions was asked the social worker (questions 23-34) and the foster mother (questions 7-15) regarding each major problem. As a result, a considerable amount of information was obtained regarding major problems shown by the child and it was possible to attain a high degree of coder agreement (85 percent or better) in classifying the major problems according to the following detailed code:

Problems in biological functioning and control

11. Enuresis
12. Soiling
13. Disturbed sleep; night terrors or nightmares, etc.
14. Other problems related to sleep or going to bed
15. Marked overeating
16. Refusal to eat
17. Dawdling or extremely slow eating

Sex behavior

18. Heterosexual activity
19. Homosexual activity
20. Masturbation
21. Excessive modesty
22. Interest in opposite sex--developed to the extent that it is a source of concern
23. Evidence of problems in appropriate sex identification or sex role behavior
24. Other sexual activity or interest which is seen as a problem but not classifiable above

Motor manifestations

25. Constant talking
26. Other kinds of hyperactivity (include impulsive behavior)
27. Extremely slow behavior (e.g., in dressing getting ready for school) (If only in eating, code in 17)
28. Nervous habits, nervous mannerisms (include speech disorders here--infantile speech, stuttering)
29. Physical problems (brain, neurological problems, deafness, visual-motor difficulty)

Development of the social self and internalization of social standards

Aggressive, destructive behavior

30. Actual physical injury to self
31. Threatened physical injury to self, either verbally or by behavior which risks self
32. Physical injury to other persons or behavior which risks physical injury to others (e.g., throwing rocks at other children)
33. Arson or fire-setting (include any actual setting of fire)

34. Playing with matches (fascination with fire) no clear indication that Subject has started one
35. Physical injury or damage to own property (tears up clothes, own toys)
36. Physical injury or damage to property belonging to others
37. Lack of socialization in regard to care of property; carelessness with clothes or property but no indication of actual destructive behavior. (Doesn't take care of them; wears them out quickly)
39. Other acts of physical injury, not classifiable above
40. Stealing
41. Lack of socialization in regard to others' possessions; does not respect other's property; takes or uses without asking; gets into things
42. Fighting or other clearly aggressive behavior (Note distinction from physical injury category)
43. Lack of socialization in regard to relationships with peers. Has difficulty in getting along with peers or other children because of aggressive behavior (quarrelsome, attempts to dominate, teases, tattles, etc.)
45. Is defiant, rebellious, resistant to authority (disobedient, refuses to obey; strongly negativistic)
46. Lack of socialization in regard to response to authority. Stubborn. Doesn't like to mind, to listen to instructions, to pay attention. (Is distinguished from above category in that this one includes the less serious behaviors associated with some resistance, but not outright defiance. "Stubborn" would be included here unless there is evidence that it is defiance or refusal to obey.)
47. Lack of socialization in regard to consideration of others
49. Other aggressive, belligerent, hostile behavior which does not fit into the above categories.

Violation of social standards

50. Lying, (Tells fibs, stories)
51. Behavior which is close to or the same as lying but which is described in other terms, such as exaggeration, phantasy, evades answering, etc.
52. Truancy from school
53. Running away from home
54. Lack of socialization in regard to asking for permission to leave. Goes off and fails to return at time expected, or goes off without telling anyone; fails to follow limits which are set in regard to leaving the foster home.

Withdrawal from or avoidance of social relations

55. Avoids social contacts; stays by self
56. Is unresponsive; won't reveal feelings. (If child shows this difficulty in one area only--such as regarding natural family--code as problem in that area and list.)
57. Fails or has extreme difficulty in developing close relationships. (In general, or in regard to adults. If otherwise, list.)
58. Has difficulty in forming close relationships, shyness.
59. Has difficulties in communicating or verbalizing
60. Other evidence of withdrawal (daydreams, talks to self; wants affection but cannot accept it; won't answer; sits and stares)

Learning to perform in socially acceptable ways -- foster home

61. Wants immediate gratification of needs; self-centered; "wants what he wants when he wants it"
62. Lacks socialization in regard to cleanliness
63. Lacks socialization in regard to rules of social intercourse, such as manners, table behavior, and other manners (polite behavior)
64. Lacks socialization in regard to neatness in care of room and/or clothes
65. Lacks socialization in regard to accepting responsibility and doing work (is lazy)
66. Lacks socialization and is immature, infantile in behavior
67. Lacks socialization in other ways
68. Immature social relations; unable to play with children his own age

Learning to perform in socially acceptable ways -- away from foster home

69. Lacks socialization and does not behave properly

Development of appropriate modes of emotional response

70. Shows fairly extreme displays of temper or anger (such as temper tantrums)
71. Is over sensitive; gets upset easily
72. Is jealous, highly competitive; shows particular rivalry; shows sibling rivalry (moc if objects or jealousy or competitiveness are named, such as natural sibs, other foster children, own children of foster parents)
73. Is demanding of attention
74. Is overly dependent upon others
75. Seeks or shows affection indiscriminately
76. Shows tension, anxiety, fears
77. Is sad, depressed
78. Shows bizarre behaviors
79. Other emotional expression (regarded as undesirable) (pouts, whines, is moody, sullen)

Attitudes toward self

80. Behavior which is self-depreciating, encourages rejections, or otherwise reflects low self-esteem
81. Shows specific evidence of conflict, insecurity, etc., over status as foster child
82. Is easily dominated, controlled, or influenced by others
83. Other specific evidence of distorted or disturbed feelings about self

Intellectual functioning

84. Is slow, has limited ability; therefore cannot do well in school
85. Does poorly in school or in part of schoolwork; not further specified
86. Does more poorly in school or in part of schoolwork than is to be expected in view of child's ability; is underachieving
87. Lacks motivation to learn or try to do school work (Doesn't take responsibility for homework)

98. Miscellaneous
99. Another person presents problem for FC
00. Child has no problem

Since the frequency of many of these detailed behaviors was low, and a means of summarizing the number of children showing certain types of behavior was needed, the following summary code was worked out as a means of grouping these behavior descriptions (See Tables 5 and 6 in Chapter III):

Problems in biological functioning: 11-29 inc.*
Problems in the development of the social self, general: 30-69 inc.
  Aggressive, destructive behavior: 30-36 inc., 39,40,42,45,49-53 inc.
  Lack of socialization in relation with others or in care of property: 37, 41, 43, 46, 47, 54, 69
  Lack of socialization in being a family member: 61-68 inc.
  Avoidance of social relations: 55-60 inc.
Problems in appropriate emotional expression: 70-79 inc.
Problems in attitude toward self: 80-83 inc.
Problems in intellectual functioning: 84-87 inc.
Miscellaneous problems: 98
No major problems described: 00

---

*These numbers refer to the detailed code of major problems shown on the previous pages.

APPENDIX C

THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

One of the problems encountered in describing children at the time of intake study is that of finding a competent person who knows the child well enough to give a reasonably valid assessment of his behavior. The Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule, used to classify the children for the present research project, and the interviews which provided evidence for the validity of the behavior ratings, were designed to be administered to a social worker and foster mother who know a child reasonably well. The children in this study were already under foster care and thus were known well enough by a social worker and mother to be rated on the schedule in the initial step of selecting this sample and to be further described by the interviews throughout the study, but at the time of intake study of a child there might be no professional person familiar with a child other than a teacher.

For this reason, we were interested in developing a rating schedule and a brief questionnaire suitable for a teacher, that is, requesting only information which she could be expected to possess through her experience with the child in the school setting. The rating schedule, insofar as possible, resembles the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule constructed for social workers, and the remainder of the questionnaire deals further with brief descriptions of the child, the home, and the help of social worker.

The major emphasis of the analysis of these data has been on the schedule which includes items regarding the child's school performance, test records, ability level, behavior in the classroom and relationship with classmates and teacher both in the classroom and on the playground, and thirty items describing behavior similar to that described in parts of the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule. Each child was rated on this schedule by his teacher late in May or in June 1964 (referred to hereafter as Round I) and again in February or March 1965 (Round II).

A portion of the information obtained from the teacher has first been used to answer the question: Can such a schedule be used to describe a child's behavior in much the same way as a social worker would describe it? In order to control as much extraneous variance as possible, the same method was used as had been applied to the first analysis of the social workers' schedules--that of a factor analysis using principal axes computing algorithm with the square of the multiple correlation as an estimator of uniqueness, with varimax rotation. The resulting factors and the items loading in each are listed in Table 7. At this point in the analysis three items were dropped: unpleasant and sullen was showing almost equal loadings on the two factors between which it was desirable to differentiate (unresponsive and aggressive); childish showed no predominant factor loading on Round II, although other items followed the same pattern found in Round I; and there was evidence in other parts of the interview that the teachers were interpreting excessively neat in various ways, most particularly as a compliment to neat written assignments.

To determine the placement of some ambiguous items, the next step was to place all the remaining items into a cluster analysis according to their factor loadings and then compute the median correlation coefficients for the items within each cluster (see Table 8). This process enabled us to see which items had to be deleted from the factors to attain clusters that are as pure as possible. By means of this analysis, submissive was found to have low correlations with all other items and was dropped completely from further analysis. Social adjustment, showing higher correlations with the items in the factor Aggressive than with those in Learning Ability, the factor on which it had its highest factor loadings, was separated and maintained only as a one-item factor.* In addition, doesn't care if teacher likes him and is dependent on teacher in social activities had correlations substantially below the medians for their respective clusters and were considered to be independent items in further analysis.

Correlation coefficients between the original factors drawn from the social workers' ratings on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule and these from the teachers were computed for the remaining items. The findings are given in Table 9, which is designed to answer in part the important question: Can the teacher describe the child as the social worker does? The answer varies with the factors. Four factors--Learning ability, Overly-emotional, Aggressive, and Unresponsive--correlate .40 or higher with their counterparts in the social worker ratings; but the other factors do not come up to this level. The higher correlations show us that teachers and social workers will locate little more than two children out of ten in the same place on a scale of children's learning ability and aggressiveness, and even fewer on tension-anxiety and unresponsiveness. However, one-third of the children found to be most aggressive by the teacher also had the highest Defiant scores by the social worker instrument and over one-half of the unresponsive children (according to the teachers) were also in the highest category of the social worker factor of Tense-anxious. On the other hand, none of the children with the lowest Aggressive scores on the Teacher Questionnaire were given high scores on Defiant by the social workers, and only one tense-anxious child, according to the social worker instrument, was found to have low scores on the teacher factor Unresponsive.

The agreement between the sums of scores in these various factors obtained from the two sets of teachers is indicated in Table 10. The variation in these coefficients of correlation indicates that teachers tend to agree much more closely in regard to some kinds of behavior than others. In view of the very low stability (or reliability) of the ratings made for the last three items in the list, these items were dropped from further analysis.

The next step was to compute the standard deviations of the three factors (Learning Ability, Aggressive, and Unresponsive) that had the highest correlations with the social worker factors and that also agreed conceptually with the original clusters on which the children were classified. Those children whose scores fell one standard deviation or more above the mean were thus designated as the most disturbed children. Table 11 compares the results of classifying the children by these two sets of data. Examination of each child's score on each cluster and the arbitrariness of his assignment to a given category raises some questions as to the advisability of such a process, which seems in part to weaken our descriptions of the children. Since another teacher in the next school year was able to approximate so closely the same perceptions of the child (see Table 10), the conclusion was reached that although the researcher cannot duplicate the social workers' classification of the children from the factors derived from this instrument, teachers do perceive aggressiveness, learning ability, and unresponsiveness in children. And it is indeed not surprising that the perceptions of teachers--based upon a child's behavior in the school setting--are somewhat different from those of social workers.

---

*The finding that Social Adjustment was so highly correlated with other indicators of learning ability suggests that "social adjustment" is defined in a highly specific way by the teacher. Further research regarding this kind of item would be profitable.

Considerable evidence was found that many ratings the teachers made were given in context of the school setting and may not describe the child's general behavior. One example has already been cited: the confusion of the item excessively neat with the concept of care in preparing assignments. Another indicator of this particular point of view was clearly illustrated by the association of the teacher's rating of the child's intellectual potential and academic performance with his social adjustment in one factor. Furthermore, it appears (Table 10) that there is less stability in the teachers' rating of unresponsive (or withdrawn) behavior than in their ratings of aggressive or of learning difficulty and ability. Such a finding is not unexpected, since the unresponsive child will be the quiet one in the class and not demand so much of the teacher's attention as will the more aggressive child; thus, she will not know him as well and may perhaps think of him as a "good" child. In spite of these disadvantages, the correlations between the teacher and the social worker are still high enough to support further work with this instrument, omitting items found unreliable in this study and adding other items.

In addition to determining the degree to which the Teacher Questionnaire can be used to classify children as a social worker would, each child's scores on the factors found to be most stable by the analysis described above were summed and the total score was considered as a measure of the child's degree of disturbance. This total score correlates .44 with the social workers' total score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule and .33 with the total score obtained from the foster mothers' responses to the Schedule at the time of Round I and Round II. An even higher correlation of .53 was found between the total score on the Teacher Questionnaire and the total score from the social workers' Round II ratings on the schedule.

A few additional rating scales analogous to ones in the mothers' and workers' interviews were included in the Teacher Questionnaire. Two of these have been discussed with respect to their use in the measure of disturbance and the classification analysis; but it also seems worthwhile to compare them with their counterparts in the mother and worker interviews. One of these, social adjustment, correlates .41 with the worker's rating and .32 with the mother's rating of how well the child gets along with his classmates. Another measure of peer relationships from the Teacher Questionnaire is "How many fairly good and very good friends does the child have in the classroom?" This variable does not take into account the number of friends the child has outside his class, nor does it measure the depth of these friendships; but correlations of .41 with the worker's rating and .50 with the mother's rating of how well the child gets along with his classmates indicate that at least part of the child's peer relationships are being assessed by the teacher's answer to this question.

Another variable rated by the mothers, workers, and teachers is the child's academic performance. The teacher rating correlates .59 with the mothers' and workers' ratings.

The consistently high percentages of agreement as well as the significant correlations found between those variablesdescribed by the Teacher Questionnaire as compared with those described by the social worker and foster mother suggest that in future studies of foster children where a child is not known sufficiently well by a worker to be rated on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule or by a worker and mother to be described accurately in an interview, a form similar to the Teacher Questionnaire can be used as a valuable tool in describing the children.

Table 7

Factors in Teacher Questionnaire

Variable Number	Item	Round I Loading	Round II Loading
	Factor I. Aggressive		
10	Aggressive	80	72
14	Destroys property	73	73
16	Daring, reckless	64	61
19	Irresponsible	45	59
22	Rebellious; defiant	78	79
30	Impulsive	72	47
33[c]	Doesn't seem to care if teacher likes him	21	62
35	Conscientious, trustworthy	-46	-51
38	Disturbing to teacher in classroom	51	57
39	Disturbing to others in classroom	64	64
40	Disturbing to others outside of class	71	74
17[a]	Unpleasant, sullen	49	65
	Factor II. Learning Ability		
4	Intellectual potential	60	66
5	Academic performance	48	82
31	Has difficulty learning things	87	81
32	Has difficulty following instructions	77	68
	Factor III. Unresponsive		
9[c]	Dependent on teacher in social activities	24	25
11	Lacks self-confidence	68	56
13	Shy, bashful	44	41
18	Rigid, has difficulty adjusting	43	70
20	Sad, depressed	75	67
28	Apathetic	64	27
17[a]	Unpleasant, sullen	57	16
12	Fearful, anxious, tense	33	55
	Factor IV. Over-emotional		
27	Overly emotional	66	64
29[a]	Childish	69	26
	Factor V.[b] Learning Ability B		
4	Intellectual potential	26	66
5	Academic performance	48	82
6	Social Adjustment	65	24

---

[a] Omitted from final factor scores.

[b] Maintained as a one-item factor: Social Adjustment

[c] Maintained as a one-item factor

Appendix C

Considerable evidence was found that many ratings the teachers made were given in context of the school setting and may not describe the child's general behavior. One example has already been cited: the confusion of the item excessively neat with the concept of care in preparing assignments. Another indicator of this particular point of view was clearly illustrated by the association of the teacher's rating of the child's intellectual potential and academic performance with his social adjustment in one factor. Furthermore, it appears (Table 10) that there is less stability in the teachers' rating of unresponsive (or withdrawn) behavior than in their ratings of aggressive or of learning difficulty and ability. Such a finding is not unexpected, since the unresponsive child will be the quiet one in the class and not demand so much of the teacher's attention as will the more aggressive child; thus, she will not know him as well and may perhaps think of him as a "good" child. In spite of these disadvantages, the correlations between the teacher and the social worker are still high enough to support further work with this instrument, omitting items found unreliable in this study and adding other items.

In addition to determining the degree to which the Teacher Questionnaire can be used to classify children as a social worker would, each child's scores on the factors found to be most stable by the analysis described above were summed and the total score was considered as a measure of the child's degree of disturbance. This total score correlates .44 with the social workers' total score on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule and .33 with the total score obtained from the foster mothers' responses to the Schedule at the time of Round I and Round II. An even higher correlation of .53 was found between the total score on the Teacher Questionnaire and the total score from the social workers' Round II ratings on the schedule.

A few additional rating scales analogous to ones in the mothers' and workers' interviews were included in the Teacher Questionnaire. Two of these have been discussed with respect to their use in the measure of disturbance and the classification analysis; but it also seems worthwhile to compare them with their counterparts in the mother and worker interviews. One of these, social adjustment, correlates .41 with the worker's rating and .32 with the mother's rating of how well the child gets along with his classmates. Another measure of peer relationships from the Teacher Questionnaire is "How many fairly good and very good friends does the child have in the classroom?" This variable does not take into account the number of friends the child has outside his class, nor does it measure the depth of these friendships; but correlations of .41 with the worker's rating and .50 with the mother's rating of how well the child gets along with his classmates indicate that at least part of the child's peer relationships are being assessed by the teacher's answer to this question.

Another variable rated by the mothers, workers, and teachers is the child's academic performance. The teacher rating correlates .59 with the mothers' and workers' ratings.

The consistently high percentages of agreement as well as the significant correlations found between those variablesdescribed by the Teacher Questionnaire as compared with those described by the social worker and foster mother suggest that in future studies of foster children where a child is not known sufficiently well by a worker to be rated on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule or by a worker and mother to be described accurately in an interview, a form similar to the Teacher Questionnaire can be used as a valuable tool in describing the children.

Table 7 - Continued

Variable Number	Item	Round I Loading	Round II Loading
	Factor VI. Learning Difficulty A		
15	Needs supervision	59	39
23	Unmotivated to do any work in school	61	29
36	Easily distracted	56	42
	Factor VII. Learning Difficulty B		
24	Demands attention	34	63
26	Dependent on teacher in academic matters	66	73
	Factor VIII. Resists Friendships		
7	Resists friendships of other children	57	67
8	Resists friendship of teacher	52	69
	Factor IX. Well-Liked		
25	Well-liked	64	67
	Factor X. Submissive		
21[a]	Submissive in arguments	65	63
	Factor XI. Excessively Neat		
34[a]	Excessively neat	66	64

---

[a] Omitted from Final Factor Scores.

Table 8

Median Correlation Coefficients for Items in Factors on Round I Teacher Questionnaire

	Aggressive I	Well liked IX	Learning Ability II	Social Adjustment V	Learning Difficulty A VI	Unresponsive III	Over-Emotional IV	Learning Difficulty B VII	Submissive X	Resists Friendships VIII
I Aggressive	46	26	23	30	39	16	23	34	04	38
IX Well-liked	26	1.00	03	35	17	20	21	15	06	33
II Learning Ability			54	26	40	17	13	38	07	10
V Social Adjustment				1.00	34	22	25	29	02	36
VI Learning Difficulty A					63	19	25	41	03	28
III Unresponsive						39	27	19	03	33
IV Over-Emotional							46	35	04	26
VII Learning Difficulty B								55	03	19
X Submissive									1.00	12
VIII Resists Friendships										59

Table 9

Correlation Coefficients between Descriptions of the Children by Teachers and by Social Workers (Round I), Using Factors Obtained from Two Different Schedules

Factors on Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule
(Data provided by social workers)

Factors on Teacher Questionnaire	Defiant	Unsocialized	Like-ability	Tension-Anxiety	Lack of Affection A	Lack of Affection B	Learning A	Learning B	Responsibility
Aggressive	45	34	-23	19	22	14	09	21	-28
Social Adjustment	15	17	-09	03	10	12	25	01	-10
Well-liked	23	02	-06	15	08	09	00	17	-07
Resists Friendship	32	15	-36	13	30	32	00	15	-20
Overly-Emotional	40	24	-12	31	14	14	09	09	-17
Unresponsive	07	-02	-26	10	40	30	31	29	-23
Dependent on Teacher - Social	28	07	-16	27	28	12	24	12	-15
Doesn't care if Teacher likes	20	23	-11	-08	11	-15	04	15	-16
Learning Ability	08	22	04	05	09	-02	48	24	-31
Learning Difficulty A	25	29	04	04	09	-03	24	29	-36
Learning Difficulty B	21	19	01	25	05	-04	24	18	-22

Table 10

Correlation Coefficients Showing Agreement Between Two Sets of Teachers' Ratings

Factors	Correlation Coefficients
Learning Difficulty B	.60
Aggressive	.59
Learning Difficulty A	.50
Learning Ability	.44
Over-emotional	.44
Social Adjustment	.36
Resists Friendships	.31
Unresponsive	.28
Doesn't Care If Teacher Likes Him	.18
Well-liked	.17
Dependent on Teacher Socially	.11

Table 11

Comparison of Classification of Children from Social Worker and Teacher Schedules

	Classification based upon Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule (Data provided by social workers)					
Classification based upon Teacher Questionnaire	Most Disturbed	Defiant	Tense-Anxious	No Pattern	Slow	Least Disturbed
Most Disturbed	8%	5%	5%	4%		
Defiant	30	15	5	32	12%	
Unresponsive	27	10	64	18	38	14%
No Pattern	35	65	26	39	25	72
Slow				7	25	
Least Disturbed		5				14
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Cases	26	21	19	28	8	10

Foster Homes Research Project
State Department of Public Welfare
Madison, Wisconsin

CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Name of child____________________Name of teacher filling this out______________

School__________________School address____________________________________

Grade___________Name of school district___________________________________

Has child been in this school entire school year?____If not, for how many months?___

Is child in class for slow learners? Yes__No__Class for emotionally disturbed? Yes___No___

TEST FINDINGS IN SCHOOL RECORD

Most recent Intelligence tests:

Individual: Name of test__________________Date________C.A._____M.A.____I.Q.______

Group: Name of test_______________________Date________I.Q.________

Most recent Achievement tests:

Reading: Name of test__________________Date________Grade placement___________

Arithmetic: Name of test_________________Date_______Grade placement__________

Your own estimate of this child's intellectual potential:

Above average________ Average________ Below average________

Your rating of child's overall academic performance:

Excellent___Above average___Average___Below average____Very poor___

Is his academic performance improving? Yes____ No______

Your rating of child's social adjustment in school:

Excellent___Above average___Average___Below average___Very poor___

Is his social adjustment improving? Yes___ No___

Please indicate any handicaps which this child has:

Hearing loss (indicate severity)_______________________________________

Speech handicap (specify)____

Reading problem (specify)____

Visual handicap (specify)____

Other (specify)____

Is child receiving any special help in school? Yes____ No____

If yes, specify____

Will this child be promoted to the next grade? Yes___No___If no, why____________

Is there any subject in which this child has particular difficulty? (specify)

______________________or does particularly well? (specify)___________________

Questionnaire for Teachers, page 2

INSTRUCTIONS: Each of the items listed is to be rated for this child. Place a mark in the column that best describes the frequency of occurrence of each behavior for the child. Please do not omit any.

		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1.	Resists attempts of other children to be friendly.					
2.	Resists attempts of teacher to be friendly; does not respond to attempts at kindness.					
3.	Is very dependent on teacher's help in social activities.					
4.	Is aggressive toward other children; starts fights, arguments.					
5.	Is lacking in self-confidence; easily discouraged; seems to have defeated attitude.					
6.	Is fearful, worrying, anxious, nervous, tense.					
7.	Is shy, bashful; remains isolated from other children.					
8.	Is destructive of others' property.					
9.	Works only under close supervision by teacher.					
10.	Is dangerously daring, reckless; runs risk of injury to self.					
11.	Is generally unpleasant, sullen, surly.					
12.	Is rigid; has difficulty adjusting to changes or new situations.					
13.	Is irresponsible and frivolous.					
14.	Seems sad and depressed.					
15.	Is very submissive in arguments or disagreements with other children.					
16.	Is rebellious, defiant, disobedient.					
17.	Is apparently unmotivated to do anything in school.					
18.	Is demanding of extra attention from the teacher.					
19.	Is well-liked by other children.					
20.	Is very dependent on teacher in academic work; asks for extra help and to have directions repeated.					
21.	Is overly emotional, excitable; over-reacts to minor incidents.					
22.	Is apathetic; seems tired.					
23.	Acts more childishly than most children his age.					
24.	Is impulsive in behavior and talking-out; seems to act before thinking.					
25.	Has difficulty learning things.					
26.	Has difficulty following instructions.					
27.	Gives no indication of caring whether liked by teacher or not.					
28.	Is excessively neat and orderly.					
29.	Is conscientious, trustworthy.					
30.	Is easily distracted, inattentive.					

Questionnaire for Teachers, page 3

Please compare the child's overall behavior in the classroom at present with that shown when he first began in this room and check the statement which applies:

Behavior has improved greatly____Behavior has become slightly worse____
Behavior has improved slightly____Behavior has become much worse____
Behavior has not changed noticeably___Other____________________________

Does this child have any good friends in the class? Yes____ No____
Please check any that apply:
one fairly good friend____ one very good friend____
several fairly good friends____ several very good friends____

What does this child seem to enjoy the most about school? (Your answer may be in any terms -- a subject, a certain activity, etc.)

What does this child seem to dislike the most about school?

Is this child regarded by the other children in the class as any different from the others? Yes___No___If yes, in what way?____________________________

Is this child's behavior disturbing or annoying to you in the classroom? Yes____ No____

Is this child's behavior disturbing or annoying to other children in the classroom? Yes, very much___Yes, to some extent___Yes, occasionally___No___

Is this child's behavior disturbing or annoying to others outside school or on the playground? Yes, very much___Yes, to some extent___Yes, occasionally___ No___

Have you talked with the social worker about this child? Yes____ No____
If yes, how often?______________________

Do you feel more frequent contacts with the social worker would be helpful? Yes___ No___

Have you talked with the foster parents about this child?
Yes___ No___ If yes, how often?_______________
Has this been helpful?________________________

Do you feel more frequent contacts with the foster parents would be helpful? Yes____ No____

Would you please indicate your feeling about how well this foster home meets the child's needs.

What methods seem to work best in handling this child?

Please comment on your work with this child.

APPENDIX D

DESCRIPTIONS OF SEVEN CHILDREN WHO WERE PLACED IN THEIR PRESENT FOSTER HOME BEFORE THEIR SECOND BIRTHDAY

Because it seems somewhat surprising to find that seven children who were selected according to their behavior ratings for inclusion in this study have experienced a long and apparently stable foster home placement since a very early age (all being under two years of age at the time they were placed in these homes), the history of each of them has been summarized from the information provided by the social workers' interviews. Although any attempt at attributing cause and effect relationships is likely to be risky, we are interested in seeing what possible relationships might exist between the child's history prior to this placement, his interaction with the foster parents, and his present level of behavior.

1. Male, nearly 8 years old at time of Round I interview

This boy was separated from his natural family when he was six months old because of the mental illmess of his mother and abandonment of his father, but he is still only under the custody of the state. He was in a temporary holding home for two days until a permanent placement could be found. His next placement was a foster home, where he stayed for five months before being moved because of his behavior. Shortly before his second birthday he was moved into the present foster home.

This child has been in contact with his natural family since he was placed in this home. A sister two years older than he is in the same foster home. A brother was there until the foster mother asked to have him removed because of his severe emotional problems, but he still visits the foster home. The natural mother has spent most of the time since the breakup of the family in a mental institution in another state, but the foster mother found out where she was and arranged a visit for the children. This visit, during the summer of 1964, was the first time the children had seen their mother in four years. At that time the mother promised to take them all back and said they would have a lot of fun together. She is idealized in the children's minds as a glamorous person, and they make this clear to the foster mother. This child also has fantasies regarding his natural father, saying that his father was a war hero, killed in service.

The connection with the natural family is also evidenced in the foster mother's attitude. To her the main job of a foster mother is, "to do much more for the foster children (than for your own children) because you want their own (natural) parents not to have as hard a time as you had when they go back." She also says that the foster child's sister would leave now to go anywhere else; yet the social worker and the foster mother both say that it is very unlikely that the mother will ever be well enough to take the children back.

The foster child and his sister are both rated as having problems with no definite pattern, but at one time they were even more severely disturbed, and the foster mother feels strongly that they still need psychiatric help. The foster child now is doing very poorly in school, although there is no sign of lack of ability. He acts out in school, using foul language and being a constant disturbance, according to the worker. The worker further says that the foster child has problems with his own age group, not in making friends, but in being a good sport. The foster mother, on the other hand, says the foster child cannot get along with peers and has few friends. The foster mother states one other problem of the foster child as being his growing desire for independence, which she strongly resents. The social worker gives the foster mother a "poor" rating in Round II, partly because the foster mother won't give the foster child the freedom needed by a child of this age.

Other indications of friction between the agency and the foster mother are found throughout the interviews. The mother "boasts" of having bypassed agency policy on several occasions; for example, of the incident of her arranging the visit with the natural mother she said, "I made all the arrangements and then let the agency know. Wasn't that sneaky!" There is a different social worker in Round II than was handling the case in Round I, and he has given more time to the foster child. He is particularly proud of having gotten the child into the Scouts and Boys' Club, but the foster mother says the foster child already is tired of them, and the new attention and activities for the foster child from the social worker are resented by her own children.

There is a father in the family, but he is so dominated by the mother that the worker feels that he cannot provide a masculine image with which the child can identify.

2. Male, 7 years of age at time of Round I interview

This boy was removed from his natural home at the age of one year because of physical and emotional neglect, as well as alcoholism of both parents. He was placed directly in his present foster home. He is under the guardianship of the state and his only contact with his natural family is with a brother living in the same foster home. The home is rated by the social worker as "good" and is not given a higher rating according to the worker because this boy needs to be an only child. This child is adoptable; the foster parents say they want to keep him, but they won't discourage the agency's moving him if someone else wants to adopt him.

This boy is rated as a "slow" child, and the social worker names "lack of motivation" as his only problem. The social worker says "I believe this child might be motivated if he had an adoptive situation."

3. Female, 9 years of age at time of Round I interview

This girl was an illegitimate child and was placed directly in the foster home when given up by her natural mother at the age of three weeks, which was approximately the same time the state took over guardianship. The agency, and consequently the child have lost all contact with the natural mother, but recently have been trying to contact her to test her for Huntington's chorea, which the child may have inherited. The worker says that this home is being considered an adoption possibility, but the foster parents made no mention of this in their interviews, although they both indicated they expect the child to stay with them.

The foster mother is rated as "good" and the social worker says the foster father is between "good" and "excellent." In order to be rated higher, the foster mother would need to be a little warmer and more "specific" in her relationship with the child.

The social worker describes this child as "defiant, rebellious, resistant." Neurological damage is suspected and plans for testing are under way.

4. Male, 10 years of age at time of Round I interview

This child was illegitimate and the mother asked the state to take over guardianship when he was six months old. He was first placed in a temporary foster home for a week, and then in another foster home for a month, but the foster mother was becoming too attached to him and asked that he be moved. He spent another month and a half in a third foster home, then was transferred to DCY, and placed in another foster home. He was a suspected hydrocephalic (but social worker doubts that this was a correct diagnosis), and was never considered adoptable. The foster parents with whom he now lives expect him to stay with them until he is grown.

This child was rated as "defiant" according to the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule, but the social worker says this of him: "He appears to be developing quite normally in spite of the foster mother's being very very controlling and often hostile, and uncooperative." In Round II, the same social worker describes the child as being "defiant," and says that most of his problems are caused by the over-protectiveness and strictness of the foster mother.

The foster mother is rated as "adequate" because "she has a lot of shortcomings, but the progress of the child indicates that she is doing an adequate job. She has a lack of understanding -- too strict in some ways -- over-controlling and overprotective." The foster father is said to have better relations with the child, but is rated no higher than "adequate" because of being dominated by the foster mother.

5. Female, 11 years of age at time of Round I interview

This girl was removed from her natural family at the age of eleven months because of "dependency and neglect." The social worker further describes the natural home as being filthy at the time; the father was an alcoholic and unemployed and the mother was pregnant. The child was placed in a baby boarding home for six months, but moved because the foster mother had to have an emergency appendectomy; however the social worker says that there were some questions about the home and this operation could have been a convenient reason for moving the child. The child then went directly to her present home.

The natural family is still very much in the picture. The worker says that the natural mother would probably say she wants the child back (the child is only a custody case), but she wouldn't want the responsibility. Other relatives have started communicating with the foster child; one wants help in the home, but the worker is skeptical of their actual interest in the child's welfare. This child still sees her siblings with the natural mother on an "irregular and unannounced" basis. Mother "shows up" anywhere from two to ten times a year. The natural family had not visited for ten months at the time of the Round I interviews, but "were practically living there before that for a few months." The child tells her mother that she hates her and is not her daughter, but belongs to the foster mother (who seems to feel great satisfaction from this negative attitude toward the natural family).

The foster parents are rated "poor" in both rounds because of the extreme need the foster mother seems to have for having children and appearing successful with them, so that she refuses to tell the agency of any problems she has with the children, and she infantilizes the children. As the worker puts it, "She's on the sick, sick, sick side."

The child is rated as "slow" on the rating schedule, but even there the worker says she thinks the child is severely disturbed, but the foster mother is hiding it from the agency.

6. Male, 11 years of age at the time of Round I interview

This boy is an illegitimate child, born of a severely retarded mother in a state institution for the retarded. The father is unknown. This boy spent the first two months of his life in the institution hospital until a foster home was found. He was moved to a baby receiving home for seven months before being placed in the present foster home. When placed at the age of nine months he was very underweight and refused to eat. The foster parents were told that he would never be able to sit alone and that he would probably have to return to the institution. At the time of placement this child was not adoptable, and although he is regarded as adoptable now, the foster father is critically ill and not working so that the foster parents cannot afford to adopt him. The foster home is rated as "good" on Round II, and the worker explains that she cannot give a better rating because the foster mother is making a "sissy" out of the foster child and the living standards are low. The child is rated as "tense-anxious" on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule and the worker reports that the health of the foster father is upsetting to the child.

7. Female, 11 years old at the time of Round I interview

This girl was given up by her mother at birth and stayed in the hospital where she was born for seven weeks. She was then placed in a foster home for about two months and then moved to a foster home in another district for a year and seven months. She was moved into her present placement shortly before her second birthday. Her natural mother gave up all rights and has not seen her.

This child is one of those included in the study on the basis of prior history only -- a statement in a report of an earlier psychological evaluation indicating that she might be "mildly disturbed." The foster mother is rated as "excellent" and the foster father as "good."

SUMMARY

Out of these seven children, there are two who are in homes rated "poor" in which there is evidence that the foster parents may have contributed to the development of the problem behavior. A third foster mother, although rated as "adequate," is described as a catalyst for the child's "defiant" behavior, and the foster father is described as too dominated by his wife to counteract the effect of her behavior.

Of the three homes rated "good," one is caring for a child described as "slow," but also is caring for four other foster children and two natural children, so that the social worker feels this child would be likely to improve only if adopted by an otherwise childless couple. A second child in a "good" home is suspected of having neurological damage but this cannot be made certain until the natural mother is located. The third child in a home rated as "good" was described as "tense-anxious" and the social worker attributes this primarily to the serious illness of the foster father.

APPENDIX E

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELIABILITY OF SOCIAL WORKER RESPONSES

Procedure

The reliability of the data provided by the social workers was estimated primarily by a re-interview procedure. Our first set of data was collected during the Round II interviews, conducted between March 16, 1965 and April 26, 1965. Each social worker in the study was then re-interviewed once by phone at an average interval of four weeks after the Round II interviews. Most social workers had been initially interviewed more than once, because more than one child in our study sample also fell into the worker's caseload. In these cases a random selection of one foster child was made for each worker, yielding a total re-interview sample of 46. Since these social workers were scattered all over the state, the repeated interviews were conducted by phone in order to save time and funds. Detailed information explaining the re-interview study was sent to the supervisors in each district. Each worker decided on a time when it would be most convenient to be interviewed, and forwarded this information to the study office. To facilitate response by the social workers, a set of response-alternative cards was sent to each worker involved. When the interviewers called the workers by phone, the workers had prepared themselves with their casework notes on the children discussed. In all except seven cases, the same interviewer who spoke with the social worker for the Round II interviews also conducted the telephone interviews. The phone interviews lasted for an average of twenty minutes.

In the Round II interview schedule 124 questions were asked, excluding repetitions in the batteries of questions asked regarding each specific problem behavior of the child, but including all contingency questions. Of this total, 79 were of the multiple-choice and short-answer type, while the remaining 45 questions were open-ended, free-answer. The telephone re-interview was based on a total of 67 questions, 60 of which duplicated the Round II items, while seven decoy questions were introduced in various parts of the interview to reduce the chance that the social workers would recognize this as an identical interview. Of the 79 short-answer questions in the original Round II interview, over two-thirds (53) were repeated, and seven of the 45 open-ended questions were repeated in the telephone interviews. A relatively small number of the original open-ended questions was repeated in order not to extend the telephone interviews beyond reason. It is felt that the repeated interviews contained a sufficiently large sample of the original items so that it is possible to determine adequately the degree of stability in social workers' responses for various types of questions.

Criteria for Evaluating Reliability

When highly complex behavior, such as social workers' evaluations of parental behavior, is measured by relatively new and crude techniques, we may not be justified in expecting a high degree of response consistency throughout the data. Nonetheless, we need some acceptable standard by which we can decide on the relative quality of our data so that we can know where we should or should not be confident that we are dealing with reliable data. On the basis of the analysis of reliability, then, certain decisions can be made to accept or reject items.

Initially, we were willing to consider as reliable only those items which had reliability coefficients of .70 or higher. This would mean that 70 percent of the variance in these items would be shared between the Round II and the re-interview measures.[3] According to this standard, we found that several items which we expected to be highly reliable would have to be dropped. Inspection of the marginal frequencies and the specific discrepancies indicated that in most of these cases, the correlation coefficient was not giving a reasonable representation of the actual degree of agreement. Consequently, we decided to use two complementary criteria to provide estimates of the reliability of data provided by social workers: one based on the correlation coefficient and the other on the percent of the total item responses which were exactly the same for both interviews. This two-fold criterion is illustrated in Table 12.

Table 12

Decision Rules for Evaluation of Item Reliability

	If reliability coefficient is less than .60	If reliability coefficient is equal to or greater than .60
And percent giving same response is less than 85	(A) REJECT	(B) ACCEPT
And percent giving same response is equal to or greater than 85	(C) ACCEPT IF low variance	(D) ACCEPT

Items meeting criteria specified in cell A (having a correlation coefficient less than .60 and having less than 85% agreement) are unequivocally rejected as unreliable items. Items which meet the criteria specified in cell D are unequivocally accepted as reliable items. The other two cells (B & C) are included because of special aspects of our data which render the criterion of the correlation coefficient less satisfactory as a measure of reliability. According to the definition of cell C, items which show a high degree of agreement (85% or better) although having a correlation coefficient below .60, are accepted as reliable items if the marginal frequencies of these items show a low degree of variance. This condition is specified because of the artificial reduction in the size of a correlation coefficient when the amount of variance in scores is very low, since the correlation coefficient is a measure of concomitant variation among scores. This may occur even when the item is highly reliable in terms of the proportion of persons assigned the same scale positions. The criteria specified in cell B (correlation coefficients of .60 or above, but relatively low percentage agreement figures) are included primarily because shifts in scale position are partly a function of the number of points in a scale.

---

[3] When the correlation coefficient is used as a reliability coefficient, it is interpreted without being squared, since it is based on repeated measures of the same variable.

and a shift between contiguous response categories does not represent the same degree of unreliability as shifts across scale positions. Hence, in these cases the correlation coefficient provides a more satisfactory measure of reliability, since it is capable of taking into account not only the number of differences in rating, but also the degree of discrepancy between ratings. In Table 2 each item is listed along with the two indices of reliability; considered together they provide a more accurate picture of item reliability than either measure taken separately.

Estimates of the reliability correlation coefficients were computed by Pearson's product-moment formula in cases where the data formed interval or ordinal scales; where the data formed dichotomous ordinal or nominal scales, the phi coefficient was used. For nominal scales containing more than two categories Pearson's contingency coefficient was used. Tetrachoric coefficients were not used for dichotomized ordinal scales because of extreme skewness in the distributions. The particular measures on which the correlation coefficients are based are specified for each item in Table 13.

Parentheses around the number of points in a scale shown in Table 13 indicate that these scales have been collapsed to a smaller number of categories from the way they were originally presented to the respondents. Initial computations for these questions yielded reliability coefficients well below our expectations, and it appeared that a particular kind of artifact was operating. We tested the hypothesis that much of the apparent instability in these items was the direct result of the number of response choices among which social workers were required to differentiate and was not attributable to the inconsistency of the workers themselves. That is, in these items we may have required workers to make finer discriminations than they were actually able to make consistently. To test for this possibility, correlation coefficients were recomputed on collapsed versions of these scales, developed by combining contiguous categories while maintaining the original ordering of the dimension scaled. If the workers were indeed unreliable sources of the kind of information requested in these scales, then the correlation coefficients based on collapsed scales would not be substantially raised. When the coefficients were raised at least to the .60 level they were retained for further analysis, but the collapsed scales replaced the more expanded versions.[4]

---

[4] It should be pointed out that the reliability coefficients resulting from collapsed scales must be regarded as hypothetical values which may or may not be obtained on repeated measurements using the collapsed scales.

Table 13

Reliability Coefficients for Questions in Social Worker Interviews

Question Number	Description of Question	Reliability Coefficient[a]	Percent same response	Number of cases	No. of points on scale
1	Was SW interviewed last summer	1.00 phi	100	46	2
1a	How long SW supervised this placement	.68[b]	69	19	11
1b	Did another worker supervise this placement before SW took over	.64 phi	68	19	2
3	Did FM call SW during past 6 months	.78 phi[b]	89	46	2
3a	How many times did FM call SW	.69[b]	70	23	3
4	How well SW feels she knows FM	.70	76	46	4
5	How well SW feels she knows FF	.82	68	43	4
6	How well SW feels she knows FC	.81 phi	78	46	(2)
9	Does FC have conflict of loyalties between own and foster families	.62 phi	82	44	2
9a	To what extent FC has conflict of loyalties	.67	.60	15	5
9c	To what extent FC's conflict of loyalties interferes with present adjustment	.64	67	15	5

(Table continued)

---

[a] Pearson product-moment r unless otherwise specified

[b] In these questions of fact, the answer given a month later would legitimately be different if it is accurate. In question 1a, an answer was counted as the same if it were identical or only one month more than the original answer. However, in questions 3 and 3a we had no way of verifying the larger number reported at the time of the reinterview, but it seems that the reliability coefficient may be artificially lowered.

Table 13, Continued

Question Number	Description of Question	Reliability Coefficient[a]	Percent same response	Number of cases	No. of points on scale
10	How well is FM fulfilling her task	.84	68	46	5
11	How well is FF fulfilling his task	.85	63	40	5
18	How difficult is FC to have in foster family	.71	54	46	(4)
19	What is FC's major problem	-[c]	92	46	2
23	Has FC shown any change in major prob. since last summer	.60	71	38	3
23a & 23b	To what extent has FC improved or gotten worse	.61[d]	86	18	(2)
24	How often does this problem come up	.73	54	37	(3)
27	How much is FM bothered by this problem	.58	78	37	(2)
29	How much is FF bothered by this problem	.33	67	30	(3)
31	Who usually handles this problem	.78C	70	43	6
32	In what ways is the problem handled	-[c]	83	35	2
32a	How sure are FP's in handling this prob.	.60	78	37	(2)
33	How well are FP's handling this problem	.78	76	37	(3)

---

[c] No correlation coefficients are reported for these questions because of the absence of a satisfactory measure for a detailed nominal code.

[d] The correlation coefficient is artificially lowered because of the lack of variance in the responses. The percent of agreement indicates more accurately the extent of reliability.

Table 13, Continued

Question Number	Description of Question	Reliability Coefficient[a]	Percent same response	Number of cases	No. of points on scale
72	How sure of herself is FM in relating to her children	.74	80	45	(4)
73	How sure of himself is FF in relating to his children	.72	75	36	(4)
74 & 74a	How often is FM at a loss vs. knowing what to expect from her children	.57 phi	91	46	(2)
75	How often do problems arise which FM is uncertain how to handle or respond to	.43	76	45	(3)
77 & 77a	How often is FF at a loss vs. knowing what to expect from his children	.41 phi	89	38	(2)
80	Have FP's made it clear to FC what is expected of him most of the time	.82 phi	98	45	(2)
81	Who usually enforces these expectations	.93C	81	46	4
82	How firm is (are) FP's in enforcing these expectations	.73	81	46	4
83	Extent to which FM tolerates deviations from her expectations	.73	71	45	4
84	Extent to which FF tolerates deviations from his expectations	.79	76	45	4
85	Overall rating of warmth and affection FC receives from FM	.69	72	46	(3)
86	Overall rating of warmth and affection FC receives from FF	.57	58	40	(3)
87	Is this home good for emot. disturbed children	.83C	85	46	3

Table 13, Continued

Question Number	Description of Question	Reliability Coefficient[a]	Percent same response	Number of cases	No. of points on scale
88	Extent to which FM is aware that different children have different personality or emot. needs	.84	83	46	4
89	Are there any other foster or own children in this home at present	1.00 phi	100	46	2
91	How aware is FF that children in his home have diff. needs	.88	76	37	4
93	FC's current academic performance	.77	67	45	6
94	How well does FC get along with playmates currently	.74	73	45	(5)
95	Comparison of FC's academic performance now vs. last May or June	.62	73	45	(3)
96	Comparison of way FC gets along with schoolmates now vs. last summer	.54	79	43	(3)
98	Chances of FC's growing up to be a mature and happy person	.71	78	46	(3)
99	Change in FC's chances for growing up to be a mature, happy person	.52	68	46	3
100	Level of income of foster family	.66	78	46	(3)
101	Does this fam. rent or own	1.00 phi	100	46	2
102	Physical cond. of outside of home	.72	76	45	4
103	Physical cond. of inside of home	.77	76	45	4
104	Size of community in which foster home is located	.85	89	46	5

Summary and Conclusions

Our data show that on the basis of 48 items on which correlation coefficients could be computed, 29 or 61 percent of the items had reliability coefficients of .70 or higher, while an additional 21 percent (10 items) had coefficients between .60 and .69. Effectively, then, 39 or 82 percent of our items attained coefficients of .60 or better, with an overall mean of .71. As a result of this analysis, 6 items (questions 27, 29, 75, 86, 96 and 99) were dropped from further analysis, since they did not meet our minimal criteria of reliability. The others are judged sufficiently reliable for us to have reasonable confidence in their stability over time. Since over two-thirds of all of the short-answer questions in the original interview schedule were repeated for the reliability study, this means that we have evidence of the stability of answers to all but a very small proportion of these questions. This is true both of items requesting evaluations or ratings as well as of questions of information.

In addition to providing us with measures of the reliability of individual items, this study has given us two other kinds of information. One pertains to the difficulty of finding completely appropriate terms to use in order to describe scale positions. As mentioned earlier, we learned through regrouping of the data that at times we were asking the social workers to make finer discriminations in ratings than they were able to do reliably. This appears to us to be both a function of the fineness of the discrimination which we were asking them to make and also of the particular terms used to designate the various positions. Much work clearly remains to be done in regard to the definition of ordinal scale positions.

A second finding is that although one can ask social workers for all kinds of evaluations and assessments of foster parents in their interaction with children, there are indeed limits to the information which they can give reliably, regardless of how well they feel they know the family. The six items that we feel it is necessary to drop because of unreliability of answers seem to us at this point to involve information that most workers are not likely to have, such as the extent to which the foster mother or father is bothered by problem behavior, or how often problems come up which the foster mother is uncertain how to handle, or how well the foster child gets along with his peers as compared with last summer. Highly reliable responses to such items presuppose a greater degree of intensive contact and observation than generally occurs in casework practice.

A determination of the degree of stability in answers is of course highly desirable in order to determine which items in our data are sufficiently error-free for further analysis. Another reason for such checks is to search out systematically the various reasons why the items are not even more reliable than they are. The value of this kind of exploration lies primarily in alerting us to certain inaccuracies which may lie hidden in our data. It is also hoped that this information will be of use to other investigators and can be built upon in further studies. Some of the more important sources of error in our data are described in detail in the following section.

Some Sources of Unreliability

Ideally, we would like to be able to account for (and ultimately to control) every discrepant response in order to maximize our confidence in the data. This ideal, although imaginable on a theoretical level, is empirically unattainable. We can, however, attempt to approximate this condition by specifying as many sources of error as possible and then to assess the probable impact of each source on the data at hand. For some of these sources the job of assessment is facilitated by the availability of coordinate information; in other cases, however, the extent and impact of errors is indeterminate. We can only speculate on what might reasonably have occurred.

Some of the more obvious sources of unreliability in the present social worker data are defined below. Where possible, some estimate of the extent of each error is given.

Change in Interviewers: In 7 of the 46 re-interviews a different interviewer than the one involved in the Round II interviews spoke with the social workers. It may be that this change in 7 cases operated to reduce the consistency of social workers' responses, perhaps because of differences in rapport, interviewer differences in intonation in asking questions, and so on. Although we have no formal estimate of possible differences in number and types of discrepancies resulting from changed versus same interviewers, we would expect that the influence on reliability of changing interviewers would be negligible. That is, we would generally expect social workers to make consistent reports of this information, independent of the particular interviewer assigned to them, as long as all interviewers were equally skilled.[5]

Data Collection Procedure: As was previously noted, the re-interviews were conducted by telephone, while the Round II interviews were conducted in face-to-face situations. An unanswerable question remains as to what would have been the degree of consistency in response if the re-interviews had been collected in a face-to-face situation? We cannot tell. Our interviewers did, however, indicate that they encountered no serious communication problems in the phone interviews, but this impression in no way provides a systematic assessment of the possible impact of interposing this mechanical device between interviewer and social worker.

Changes in Context of Items: Only some of the questions asked in the Round II interviews were repeated in the telephone interviews, although the relative order of items remained the same. It may be that some social workers interpreted some items in a different way when the sequence and therefore the context of the questions was changed. It would obviously be desirable that the meaning and interpretation of each item be independent of its position with respect to other questions in the schedule, but investigations of this problem in other fields have cast some doubt on such an assumption. In the present case we have no way of telling if this variation in sequence had any effect on our data, and if so, to what extent.

---

[5] The number of discrepancies contributed by each of the 12 interviewers was computed. No significant differences were found. Because of the relatively small number of cases involved, it is not possible to test adequately for differences in reliability coefficients between "same" and "different" interviewers without introducing spuriousness and statistical artifacts.

Coding Procedures: For the purpose of the present reliability study, 100 percent of the coding was check coded. Discrepancies that occurred between coders were all resolved, by code changes when necessary and by uniform interpretation, so that we are confident that the coding operation introduced no error variation into the data.

Number of Response-Alternatives: The number of points in the various rating scales employed in these questions varied from 2 to 6. As mentioned above, it appeared that some of these rating scales required too fine a discrimination for many workers to make reliably, and, as a result, the scales were collapsed, using all of the information we could glean from the types of discrepancies to indicate the scale position providing the greatest ambiguity. However, even though the apparent reliability of collapsed scales is appreciably higher in a number of instances, it is still possible that some of these increases are due to artifacts and are not replicable findings.

Social Worker Familiarity: There is considerable evidence in our data of great variation in the extent to which the social worker is familiar with the foster family and the child's placement in it. This would be expected to have an effect upon the reliability of the answers given by the worker. In order to test such an hypothesis, a separate tabulation was made of the discrepancies contributed by workers who said they knew the foster mother very well or fairly well and by those who said they knew the foster mother slightly or hardly at all. Only questions involving evaluations of the foster parent or of his interaction with the foster child were used. All of the discrepancies were tabulated for the scales as originally used, before any collapsing of scales was done.

In Table 14 are listed the proportion of discrepancies contributed by these two groups of social workers, those who reported they knew the foster mother "very well" or "fairly well" (N=41), and those who reported they knew the foster mother "slightly" or "hardly at all" (N=5). For the questions regarding the foster father, the workers' rating of how well she knew him was used; 32 reported they knew him "very well" or "fairly well" and 14 reported they knew him "slightly" or "hardly at all." While we can place little confidence in the stability of any one percentage figure, the general pattern of differences between these two groups is meaningful. Very few of these differences reach even the .05 level of statistical significance. This suggests that the workers' lack of familiarity with the foster parents was not an important factor in producing discrepant answers.

Table 14

Relationship between Social Worker's Degree of Familiarity with Foster Parents and Discrepant Answers Given in Reliability Interviews

For Foster Mothers

Question Number	Description of Question	Percent of discrepancies in answers given by social workers who say they		Total number of discrepancies	Significance level
		Know FM very well or fairly well	Know FM slightly or hardly at all		
		(N=41)	(N=5)		
10	How well is FM fulfilling her task?	29%	60%	15	-
18	How difficult is FC to have in family group?	46	60	22	-
27	Degree FM bothered by first problem	44	40	20	-
31	Who usually handles first problem?	32	60	16	-
32a	How sure are FP's in handling first problem	49	40	22	-
33	How well do FP's handle first problem?	68	20	29	.05
72	How sure of self is FM in relating to children?	41	60	20	-
74/74a	How often FM knows what to expect from children?	44	40	20	-
75	How often FM uncertain how to handle problems?	46	60	22	-
80	Do FP's make it clear to FC what is expected?	2	20	2	
81	Who usually enforces expectations?	22	0	9	-
82	How firmly do FP's enforce expectations?	20	20	9	-
83	Extent FM tolerates deviations from expectations?	32	20	14	-

Table continued on next page

Question Number	Description of Question	Percent of discrepancies in answers given by social workers who say they		Total number of discrepancies	Significance level
		Know FM very well or fairly well	Know FM slightly or hardly at all		
		(N=41)	(N=5)		
85	How warm is FM toward FC?	32%	20%	14	-
87	Is this home good for emotionally disturbed children?	15	20	7	-
88	Extent FM aware children have different needs?	17	20	8	-
100	Level of income of foster family?	27	80	15	.02

For Foster Fathers

Question Number	Description of Question	Percent of discrepancies in answers given by social workers who say they		Total number of discrepancies	Significance level
		Know FF very well or fairly well	Know FF slightly or hardly at all		
		(N=32)	(N=14)		
11	How well is FF fulfilling his task?	34%	43%	16	-
29	Degree FF bothered by first problem	56	50	25	-
73	How sure of self is FF in relating to children	31	64	19	.05
77 & 77a	How often FF knows what to expect from children	50	79	27	-
84	Extent FF tolerates deviations from expectations	22	36	12	-
86	How warm is FF toward FC?	34	57	19	-
91	Extent FF aware children have different needs	22	36	12	-

Effects of Interviews on Social Worker Involvement: An effect which is endemic to most social research cannot be ignored in the interpretation of our data; that is, the worker's experience in being interviewed in Round II may, at least to some extent in some cases, have served as stimulus to the worker by increasing the salience of her job performance with respect to the family reported on. It may be that in some cases workers made certain ratings during Round II interviews, and subsequently increased their contact and information about these families, even though at that time there was no announcement that she would be re-interviewed. Insofar as the Round II interviews served as a stimulus for workers to verify their impressions and to learn more about these families, the data collected in the phone interviews may in fact be more reliable than the data collected in the Round II interviews. Whatever truth there may be in this hypothesis the possibility remains, that to the extent that this effect operated, at least part of the discrepant scores obtained in these two sets of interviews may be attributable to the extraneous influence of the fact of the study. We have no systematic data with which to determine which workers increased their interaction and information about these families because of their initial experience of being interviewed.

Actual Change Over Time: It would not be legitimate to count as unreliable responses to questions in the re-interviews which are different from responses to Round II questions, when actual change has occurred between interviews. In a few cases it has been possible to discount certain discrepant responses as being due to actual change in the variable measured, such as in how long the social worker has supervised the placement. When we found evidence for this situation, we have counted such discrepancies as "legitimate" discrepancies and adjusted the percentage of agreement accordingly. In other cases, however, we have not been able to find sufficient evidence for considering discrepancies as due to objective changes. This does not mean, however, that the possibility of other objective changes does not exist.

APPENDIX F

THE FOSTER PARENT ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

Foster Homes Research Project
State Department of Public Welfare
Madison, Wisconsin

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Name of parent__________________________Child's name__________________________
(Check whether: Foster mother______ Foster father______)

Here are some opinions about various matters which people have expressed from time to time. There are no right or wrong answers. We would like to know your opinions. In answering the questions which refer to "a foster child" or which refer to a foster child as "he", please try to answer them in regard to the child whose name is shown above.

After I read the question to you, please tell me for each if you agree with it strongly, if you agree mildly, if you disagree mildly, or if you disagree strongly.

A - Strongly agree
a - Mildly agree
d - Mildly disagree
D - Strongly disagree

1. A foster child should be told what things he cannot do if he wants to keep on living in your home.
2. I can't stand a child who won't wash until someone makes him do it.
*3. If a foster child never talks about school when he gets home, it's partly the foster parents' fault for not taking more interest.
4. The most satisfying thing about being a foster parent is feeling that you can do so much good.
5. I wouldn't want to care for a foster child if I knew he would leave in a year or two.
6. If children would only mind, the rest of the problems would take care of themselves.
7. Foster parents who are good with one foster child will be good with any foster child: it's a matter of knowing how to handle children.
*8. When a child does something wrong for the first time, I think it's better to explain what is expected of him than to punish him.
9. It really isn't fair to do things for foster children that you haven't done for your own children.
10. As a foster parent you may have to try hard to feel love for a child.
11. I don't have much patience with a child who is slow at catching on to something.
12. It's hardly fair to bring children into the world with the way things look for the future.
*13. If I knew a child would feel he had to lie about something, I wouldn't press him to tell me.
14. Most parents worry about neglecting their own family when they decide to take foster children.

---

*In these items the "Strongly agree" answer received the maximum score; in all other items the "Strongly disagree" answer was scored highest.

*15. I make it a policy not to tell a child to do something unless I intend to take time enough to see that he actually does it.
16. Parents naturally feel closer to the child who is obedient than to the child who won't listen.
17. Parents who are anxious to please a foster child often end up spoiling him.
18. In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better.
*19. Foster parents may have to change some of the standards of behavior in their home when they take a foster child.
*20. A child always deserves to know why he is being asked to do something.
*21. Foster parents have to find ways of giving extra attention to one child even though it means slighting the other children.
22. When I tell a foster child to do something, I expect him to drop whatever he is doing and obey.
*23. I think it's important to encourage a foster child to talk about his own family.
24. I would feel I was not doing a good job if the school or neighbors complained about my foster child's behavior.
25. I believe that people who lie and steal are going to have to answer for this kind of behavior some day.
26. If a child day-dreams a lot, you get just as far by overlooking it as you do by trying to find out what is wrong.
27. Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.
28. Even though I often feel disappointed in my child, I try not to let him know how I feel.
29. Threatening a foster child with having to leave your home is sometimes the only way you can get him to obey.
*30. I don't let the foster child get out of obeying me just because something else interrupts us.
31. When a child refuses to tell you what's bothering him there is no point in trying to help him.
32. I don't believe in making exceptions to important rules.
33. I wish other people could know how hard foster parents have to work to make something out of a foster child.
34. There's little use writing to public officials because often they aren't really interested in the problems of the average man.
35. After I punish a child I always feel guilty.
36. If a child doesn't learn to follow the letter of the law when he is little, it will be impossible to control him when he is older.
*37. Foster parents can find ways of giving extra attention to one child without making the other children jealous.
38. Foster parents have to punish a child promptly for talking back, even if they understand why he does it.
39. I don't believe in changing the rules for a foster child just because he has had a rougher time than other children.
40. These days a person doesn't really know whom he can count on.
*41. Foster parents often have to be satisfied with very little improvement in the foster child.

42. When a child first comes to live with you, it's important to lay down the rules right away.
*43. Foster parents can't decide on the rules for a foster child until they have met him.
44. A foster parent has to work out the most difficult problems in foster care on his own.
45. Foster parents can't expect a child to obey if they make any exceptions in what they punish him for.
*46. If a child wants to make up with you after being punished, I think it's important to make it easy for him.
47. I would prefer a child who is quiet and reserved to one who is a little overactive.
48. I don't like to change my plans after I have started to do something.
49. The real reward in being a foster parent is to know that people think what you are doing is a wonderful thing.
50. When a child continues to do things that annoy his foster parents, he deserves a spanking.
*51. Foster parents have to be willing to try out different methods of child rearing.
52. A good foster parent should not have to rely on others for help, even with difficult children.

APPENDIX G - INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Foster Homes Research Project

Department of Public Welfare
Madison, Wisconsin

SOCIAL WORKER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
ROUND I

1. How long have you supervised this foster family?
2. How long have they been known to the agency (DCY)?
3. Were they parents for any other agency before coming to DCY? Yes; No; DK
    - 3a. What agency was this?
    - 3b. Do you know how long they were foster parents for this agency? Yes; No
        - 3c. For how long?
        - 3d. How many children did they care for under the supervision of this agency?
        - 3e. Carried over from other agency to DCY
4. And, how many children have they cared for as foster parents for DCY, not including those currently in their home?
5. How many foster children do they have at present?
6. I'd like to know the first name, sex and age of each foster child and the length of time each has been in the home. (Foster children currently in home)
7. How well do you feel you know this foster mother?

    Very well; Fairly well; Slightly; Hardly at all
8. Same as Q.7 for FOSTER FATHER.
9. Same as Q.7 for FOSTER CHILD.
10. I'd like to list the total number of placements________ ________(NAME OF CHILD) has had since leaving his own family, including institutions, receiving homes, trial visits to his own family, and so on.

    Starting with the placement prior to this present one, could you tell me whether it was a foster home, institution, or other, how long the child was there, and what the reason for his leaving was. I also need to know the number of social workers who supervised him (her) in each placement. If the same worker supervised more than one placement, just tell me and I have a way of noting this.
11. At what age did child leave his family?
12. Is____________(NAME OF CHILD) under the guardianship of the state? Yes; No
    - 12a. When did the state assume guardianship?
    - 12b. When did the state take over the custody of_________(NAME OF CHILD)?
13. Would you look at this card and tell me which of these conditions led to (CHILD)'s being separated from his family? And for each would you indicate whether it was related especially to one person in particular--for example, whether the physical neglect was primarily by the mother. If none of these applies, please describe the situation which existed.

	PERSON INVOLVED			
CARD 1	Mother	Father	Both Parents	Other Person
A. Physical neglect				
B. Emotional neglect				
C. Harsh physical punishment				
D. Physical abuse				
E. Child's behavior				
F. Severe physical illness of parent				
G. Mental illness of parent				
H. Alcoholism of parent				
I. Other:________________				

14. Now I'd like to ask you about (CHILD)'s present situation. Is (CHILD)'s family interested in having him (her) returned to them? Yes; No

    14a. Which member(s)?

    14b. Upon what does this depend?

15. How likely do you think it is that (CHILD) will return to (RELATIVE)?

16. Are you seeing (CHILD)'s (RELATIVE) regularly in an attempt to work with them? Yes; No

    16a. How often do you see them?

    16b. Is anyone working with (RELATIVE) at the present time? Yes; No

        16c. Who is this?

17. Does (CHILD) ever see any of his (her) family? Yes; No

    17a. Which member(s) does he (she) see?

    17b. How often? (FOR EACH)

    17c. How interested do you think (CHILD) is in maintaining this relationship?

18. Do (does) (RELATIVE(S) come to the foster home to see him (her)? Yes; No

    18a. How often? (FOR EACH)

19. What seem to be the attitudes of the foster mother and the foster father toward (RELATIVE(S)?

20. To what extent does this child have a conflict of loyalties between his own family and the foster family?

    (IF ANY CONFLICT)

    20a. How are you attempting to handle this?

    20b. How do you think this conflict is influencing his current adjustment in the foster home?

    20c. How do you think this conflict is affecting the foster family's attitude toward him?

21. How well do you think the present foster parents were prepared for (CHILD)?

    Very well; Fairly well; Pro Con; Not well; Not at all; Don't know

    21a. In what ways do you think they could have been better prepared?

22. With regard to the specific challenges presented by this child's situation and considering the goal set for the placement, what is your overall estimate of the way the foster mother and foster father are fulfilling their task? Would you say the foster mother is doing: (SHOW CARD TWO) What about the foster father?

A. An excellent job; B. A good job; C. An adequate job;
D. Somewhat less than adequate job; E. Poor job

23. How would you rate the physical care the child is receiving in this foster home? Would you say it is: (SHOW CARD THREE)

Excellent; Good; Fair; Rather poor; Poor

24. How difficult a child would you say (CHILD) is to have in a family group?

Very difficult; Somewhat difficult; Not very difficult; Not at all difficult

IF DIFFERENCES IN DIFFICULTY TO VARIOUS MEMBERS OF FAMILY, PLEASE SPECIFY:
24a.

25. What do you think are the main behaviors or problems of this child with which the foster parents have had to cope?

26. Which ones do you feel they have handled very well with this child?

27. Which ones do you feel they have handled rather poorly with (CHILD)?

28. Now a more specific question. To what extent do you feel the foster mother is able to accept and like this child just as he (she) is -- with all his (her) problems?

29. To what extent and in what ways do you think she is upset or bothered or annoyed by his (her) behavior?

30. Do you feel she has shown any change in her attitude toward his (her) behavior?

31. Do you feel there is any evidence of rejection in her attitude toward (CHILD)?

32. Same as Q.28 for FOSTER FATHER.

33. Same as Q.29 for FOSTER FATHER.

34. Same as Q.30 for FOSTER FATHER.

35. Same as Q.31 for FOSTER FATHER.

36. How would you rate the overall warmth, affection and feeling of security this child is receiving in this foster home from each parent? (SHOW CARD 4)

FOSTER MOTHER: Very warm; Warm; Fairly warm; Not too warm; Not warm
FOSTER FATHER: Very warm; Warm; Fairly warm; Not too warm; Not warm

37. How about (CHILD)'s attitude? Do you happen to know whether he (she) always responds to warmth or affection when it is expressed by the foster parents, sometimes responds, or would you say he (she) seldom or never responds?

37a. To what extent do you feel the foster parents are able to continue to express warmth and affection toward (CHILD) when he (she) makes little or no response to it?

38. Now, I'd like to get your ideas on how well suited the (FOSTER PARENTS) are for (CHILD). Will you please tell me which of these best describes your attitude toward the suitability of this foster home for this child? (SHOW CARD 5)

Very well suited; Suited to some extent; Not sure; Probably not suitable; Not at all suitable

38a. What characteristics seem to you to make it suitable for (CHILD)?

38b. What are the ways in which it is not well suited for (CHILD)?

39. To what extent at present do (CHILD)'s emotional needs interfere with his (her) functioning adequately in the situations listed on this card? (SHOW CARD 6) For each would you tell me whether you think his (her) emotional needs interfere greatly, to some extent, slightly, or not at all?

40. (a) In interpersonal relationships with the foster parents?

41. (b) In interpersonal relationships with peers?

42. (c) In a slightly frustrating situation?

43. (d) In a work situation when work is appropriate to his (her) ability level?

44. Now, thinking about the kinds of discipline and controls used by the foster parents, I'd like to ask you about the foster mother and the foster father separately. Will you look at the next card (SHOW CARD 7) and tell me which category you think best describes the strictness of the foster mother?

Very strict; Fairly strict; Fairly lenient; Very lenient

45. Same as Q.44 for FOSTER FATHER.

46. How consistent do you think the foster mother is?

Very consistent; Fairly consistent; Fairly inconsistent; Very inconsistent

47. Same as Q.46 for FOSTER FATHER.

48. To what extent has the foster mother adapted her standards of expected behavior to this foster child's needs?

49. Same as Q.48 for FOSTER FATHER.

50. On this next card (SHOW CARD 8), there are listed a number of different methods of control and discipline. Please tell me for each whether this method is used often, sometimes, seldom, or never by the foster mother and by the foster father to discipline and control (CHILD).

(a) Uses physical punishment
(b) Moralizes and makes child feel guilty
(c) Scolds and ventilates anger
(d) Squelches own anger even though it is present
(e) Reasons calmly with child
(f) Offers rewards as incentive for good behavior
(g) Takes a studied, intellectualized approach to the misbehavior of the child
(h) Makes threats which will not be carried out
(i) Accepts misbehavior as to be expected
(j) Withdraws from the child and denies love
(k) Denies privileges.

51. Foster mothers seem to vary in their feelings about what aspects of their job are hardest for them. I'd like you to look at this list (SHOW CARD 9) and rate each of these in terms of how hard it is for this particular foster mother -- very hard, somewhat hard, somewhat easy, or very easy.

(a) Coping with the child's behavior
(b) Accepting agency supervision
(c) Physical demands of the work required
(d) Reactions of other members of the family to the foster child
(e) Coping with interference of the child's family
(f) Standing up to community pressures regarding the child
(g) Insufficient reimbursement
(h) Lack of apparent progress or improvement in child.

52. What about Mr. (NAME OF FOSTER FATHER), how much satisfaction do you think he finds in being a foster father?

53. I have a list here of some impressions that workers have of the underlying motivations of some of the foster parents they have worked with. I would like you to look at each one and tell me the extent to which you feel it is an important motivation for this particular foster mother. (SHOW CARD 10)

Very important; Fairly important; Of some importance; Of very little importance; Of no importance; Don't know...

(a) To "undo" parental deprivation she herself experienced as a child
(b) Because of her identification with the "underdog" and "unfortunate" people
(c) Putting religious beliefs into action; doing God's work
(d) Because she enjoys the challenge of a difficult task
(e) Because it adds to the family's income
(f) Because the continued presence of children is essential for harmony in marriage
(g) Because of the general warmth foster mother feels for children
(h) Because the presence of children satisfies the need to control and direct others
(i) Because role provides prestige with neignbors, community, or friends
(j) Because absence of children would make foster mother feel less feminine
(k) Because the rearing of foster children is in keeping with family tradition of caring for "other" children
(l) Because rearing children takes little effort for the foster mother
(m) Other factors:____

54. Same as Q.53 for FOSTER FATHER with the following additions:

Because of a strong paternal drive
Because presence of foster children makes foster father feel more adequate
Because foster father wants to please his wife in her desire to be a foster parent

55. In what role do you think Mrs. (FOSTER MOTHER) sees herself (CARD 12) and to what degree: Very much; Yes; Maybe; No...

(a) Replacement of (CHILD)'s parent
(b) Supplemental parent in addition to (CHILD)'s own parent
(c) An arm of the agency
(d) A "lady bountiful", i.e., a guardian of children generally
(e) A person demonstrating the right way to rear children
(f) A person helping a particular group of children with whom she identifies, such as children from her church
(g) Other:____

(ASK FOR EACH "VERY MUCH" OR "YES" CHECKED FOR c, d, e, or f ON CARD 12)
55a. Could you tell me more about this?

56. Thinking of Mr. and Mrs. (FOSTER PARENTS) each separately, and of them also as a couple, do you think there are any unusual motivating factors that have contributed to their becoming foster parents in the first place or to their continuing as foster parents?

57. It must be very difficult at times to have a child like (CHILD) in one's home. Why do you think the (FOSTER PARENTS) continue keeping him (her)?

58. We know it is very difficult to give overall evaluations of people, but I'm going to ask you to try to make some. How secure or confident a person is Mrs. (FOSTER MOTHER) in her maternal role? (SHOW CARD 13)

Extremely secure; Quite secure; Fairly secure; Rather secure; Very insecure

59. Using the same card, please tell me how secure or confident a person you think Mr. (FOSTER FATHER) is in his occupational role?

60. And, how secure or confident a person is he as a father?
(Same alternatives as for Q.58 and Q.59)

61. How happy do you think the (FOSTER PARENTS)'s marriage is?

Very happy; Happy; Average; Unhappy; Very unhappy

62. Thinking of Mr. and Mrs. (FOSTER PARENTS) as a couple, are you aware of ways in which they have distinctly different attitudes? Yes; No; DK

62a. I'd like you to describe what seems to you to be the most important of these.

63. How about their ideas about children and the way to train and help a child? Are you aware of any distinctly different attitudes in this area?
Yes; No

63a. Would you describe what seems to you to be the most important of these?

63b. How do you think they resolve their differences in regard to (CHILD)?

64. Thinking about (CHILD) now, what do you think are his (her) greatest needs at the present time?

65. You may already have mentioned this, but I'd like to get some information regarding three specific needs listed on this next card (SHOW CARD 14). For each category, I wish you would tell me whether you think this is very important, fairly important, or not important for (CHILD).

66. Also, I'd like your evaluation of the extent to which the foster home is succeeding in meeting each of them -- whether you think the foster home is doing very well, fairly well, poorly, very poorly, or if you are not sure.

A. Need for a substitute family
B. Need for help in relating to other people
C. Need for a clearer identity

(IF "NEED FOR A CLEARER IDENTITY" IS RATED AS VERY IMPORTANT OR FAIRLY IMPORTANT, ASK:)
66a. Could you tell me more about this?

67. We're also interested in (CHILD)'s school adjustment. What is your impression of his (her) over all school adjustment as of the end of the school year? (INCLUDE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE)

68. Do you feel his special needs are being met in his present school placement? Yes; No

68a. What special needs does he have which are not being met?

69. Does this child have any special medical needs? Yes; No

69a. What are they?

69b. What does this require of the foster parents?

69c. How do they feel about it?

70. Thinking just of the last two months now, how many times have you visited this foster home?

71. During these two months, how many casework interviews did you have with the foster mother?

72. Same as Q.71 for FOSTER FATHER.

73. During this time, how many casework interviews did you have with BOTH foster parents together?

74. (IF "NONE" DURING THE PAST TWO MONTHS WITH FOSTER MOTHER)
During the time you have been responsible for this placement, have you ever had a casework interview with Mrs. (FOSTER MOTHER)? Yes; No

75. Same as Q.74 for FOSTER FATHER.

76. In what areas do you think these foster parents need help in order to do their job more effectively? None, or____________________________

(IF ANY MENTIONED)
76a. How do you think they can be helped?

76b. Are there resources other than your direct work with them that you think would be helpful?

77. How ready or willing do you feel the foster mother is to discuss areas in which she might use help or interpretation?

78. How productive a casework relationship do you think you have with the foster mother?

Very productive; Moderately productive; Unproductive; Hostile

79. Do you think this home is one which can provide a good experience for emotionally disturbed children?

80. What kinds of disturbed children do you think this home would not be suited for?

81. Have any children ever been removed from this foster home by the agency because this was an unsuitable placement? Yes; No

    81a. Could you tell me the specific reasons for this? (ASK FOR EACH CHILD WHO HAS BEEN REMOVED: OBTAIN DESCRIPTION OF CHILD.)

82. Have you ever had a casework interview with (CHILD)? Yes; No

    82a. How many times have you talked with him (her)?

    82b. What plans do you have for casework treatment of this child?

    82c. (IF ANY PLANS) Which of these methods (SHOW CARD 15) are you using, or do you intend to use, in order to carry out these plans?

    A. Environmental management
    B. Supportive interviews with foster parents
    C. Direct supportive work with child
    D. Relationship treatment and interpretation to child
    E. Clarification and development of insight
    F. Referral for psychiatric treatment
    G. Group therapy
    H. Other (SPECIFY):

    82d. How would you rate your present casework relationship with this child?

    Child relates well; Relationship is improving; Relationship is deteriorating; No casework relationship

    82e. Do you think the foster mother fully accepts your talking alone with the child or does she seem a bit concerned or uncomfortable about it?

    82f. Same as Q.82e for FOSTER FATHER.

    82g. Has anyone else in the agency seen (CHILD) on a casework basis? Yes; No

    82h. Who was this?

    82i. How many times?

83. Has (CHILD) ever received psychotherapy? Yes; No

    83a. At what age?

    83b. Where?

    83c. For how long?

    83d. Is he (she) presently receiving psychotherapy? Yes; No

    83e. Do you think psychotherapy would be desirable for him (her) if it could be arranged?

84. Are there any other resources or services which you think would be helpful to (CHILD)? Yes; No (If NO, terminate interview)

    84a. What are these?

    84b. (ASK FOR EACH RESPONSE TO Q.84a) Is this service available?

TERMINATE INTERVIEW

Foster Homes Research Project

Department of Public Welfare
Madison, Wisconsin

FOSTER MOTHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
ROUND I*

During the next few weeks we will be talking to more than a hundred foster parents throughout Wisconsin who care for children for the state.

The Department of Public Welfare wants to know what it is like to be a foster parent and believes that by far the best way to find out is to talk with foster parents themselves. Nobody knows as well as you do what it is like to care for foster children and we know that there is a great deal you can help us understand.

Some of the things we will be talking about you may have already told the social worker, but rather than asking for them second-hand, we feel it is much better to ask you directly. Whatever you tell us will be considered confidential.

We think the results will be very helpful to many people working in this field, and feel that there is a great deal we can learn from you.

1. We'll start by asking the date when you first started as a foster parent.
2. Was this for the Division for Children and Youth? Yes; No
   - 2a. Can you tell me the name of the agency you started with?
   - 2b. How long were you a foster mother for another agency?
   - 2c. When did you first become a foster mother for DCY?
3. How many foster children have you cared for since you became a foster parent?

   _____for other agency; _____for other agency and continued in care under DCY; _____for DCY
4. How many foster children are you caring for at the present time?
5. Will you give me the name, sex and age of each (this) child?
6. I'd like you to think back to the time when you first became a foster parent. Did someone ask you or suggest that you become a foster parent?
   - 6a. Who was this?
   - 6b. Why did they ask you or suggest it to you?
   - 6c. Can you recapture your thinking at the time and tell me why you were interested in being a foster parent?
7. Everyone has some ideas about what a new job will be like before it starts. In what ways would you say being a foster parent has been very different from what you expected?
8. In general, thinking about your experience in being a foster parent for (CHILD), what would you say has been most satisfying to you?
9. And, what would you say has been the hardest or most difficult for you in being a foster mother for (CHILD)?

---

*The foster father's interview schedule was shorter than that used with the foster mother but, except for this, was nearly identical with the mother's schedule.

10. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about (CHILD). Before he (she) was placed here, I'm sure the social worker told you something about him (her). Would you say you had a very good idea of what he (she) was like, a fairly good idea, or that you knew some things, knew very little, or knew nothing?

    10a. What kinds of things do you think it was especially helpful for you to know about him (her)?

11. Were there some things you didn't know until later that you think it would have been helpful to know in advance?

    11a. What were these?

12. Now, I have some questions about your social worker. Who is your present caseworker?

13. Considering the contacts you have had with (SOCIAL WORKER), how well do you feel he (she) knows you? Would you say very well, moderately well, slightly, or hardly at all?

14. We're interested in the way foster parents think of their responsibilities as compared with those of the caseworker. First, what do you think are your most important responsibilities as a foster mother?

15. And, what do you think are the most important responsibilities of the caseworker?

16. Does (SOCIAL WORKER) ever talk to (CHILD) by him (her) self?

    16a. Why do you think he (she) does that?

    16b. How do you feel about it?

17. Have you ever discussed problems or questions regarding (CHILD)'s behavior with (CASEWORKER)?

    17a. How helpful have you found this?

18. Do you feel you have gotten much encouragement or backing from your social worker?

19. Do you ever call the caseworker on the telephone?

    19a. About how often?

    19b. For what sorts of things?

20. Are there any ways in which you feel somewhat uncomfortable with or dissatisfied with (CASEWORKER)?

    20a. Can you tell me about this?

21. You've probably had a number of different caseworkers. Has this made any difference to you in your on-going care of (CHILD)?

22. Have there been times when you didn't know who your caseworker was?

    22a. Whom would you have called if any questions or problems came up?

23. Have you ever met any members of (CHILD)'s own family?

    23a. Whom did you meet?

    23b. Do they visit (CHILD) here?

    23c. How often?

23d. Have (CHILD)'s contacts with his (her) own family made any problem for you?

23e. Does knowing (RELATIVES) make a difference in the way you think of your relationship with (CHILD)?

23f. In what way?

24. Does (CHILD) ever mention any member(s) of his (her) family?

24a. In what way?

25. How does (CHILD) seem to explain to himself (herself) who you are and who his (her) own family is?

26. Is there any way in which you are trying to change his (her) thinking about your relationship with him (her)?

26a. In what way?

27. What are the long-term plans for (CHILD)?

28. Does (CHILD) use your last name?

28a. For how long has he used it instead of his own last name?

29. We're also interested in (CHILD)'s school. Have you ever talked with his (her) teacher about his (her) work?

29a. What prompted you to do this?

29b. How often during the school year have you talked to his (her) teacher?

29c. Have you definitely refrained from doing so or has there been no reason to see the teacher?

29d. Why didn't you talk to the teacher?

30. Thinking more about (CHILD) at home now, I'd like you to look at this list (SHOW CARD ONE) and tell me which of these you think he (she) needs most from you at the present time? And, what would you say are the next two in importance?

A. Good food
B. Good physical care
C. Correcting bad habits
D. Giving him (her) a permanent place in a family
E. Giving him (her) love and affection
F. Cooperating with worker to find out what kind of help child needs
G. Cooperating with worker to give child the kind of help he needs
H. Teaching child how to live in a family
I. Teaching child to be clean and neat
J. Caring for child while he (she) has medical problems treated
(RECORD COMMENTS)

31. Looking back over the time you've had (CHILD) with you, what have been the main problems or kinds of behavior with which you've had to cope?

31a. (FOR EACH) How have you tried to handle this? (OBTAIN DETAILS)

32. And, what about the present time? What are the main problems or kinds of behavior with which you have to cope?

32a. (FOR EACH) How do you usually handle this?

33. It must be hard at times to care for a child like (CHILD). What keeps you going?

34. What effect do you think having this child here has had upon your own family? (IF NEEDED TO CLARIFY) What does it mean to various members of your family?

35. Now, I'd like to ask you about something else. Listed on this card (SHOW CARD 2) are different ways in which some foster children behave. I'd like you to consider each one and tell me whether (CHILD) has ever behaved in this way.

36. (FOR EACH) Is this a problem at present?

37. (ASK FOR EACH ITEM WHICH HAS OCCURRED) How have you handled this?

A. Daydreams
B. Can't be comforted when he's (she's) feeling badly
C. Picks fights with other children
D. Cheats and lies
E. Doesn't take care of things
F. Won't confide in me
G. Compares us unfavorably with his own family or another foster family
H. Doesn't express any gratitude to us
I. Won't listen when I try to talk with him (her)
J. Shows as much affection toward people he (she) hardly knows as toward us
K. Has an unpredictable temper
L. Is such a poor playmate that other children won't play with him (her)
M. Demands constant attention from one of us
N. Has irrational fears or fears that don't seem to have any basis
O. Talks all the time
P. Is always on the move; can't stay with one task or activity; is easily distracted
Q. Is not dependable or reliable; we have to stay right with him (her) to see that he (she) does what we tell him (her) to do
R. Is overly curious about possessions of others
S. Has sleep problems
T. Is overly curious about sex; invades privacy of other members of family
U. Has offensive personal habits; won't wash or bathe as often as he (she) should
V. Won't stand up for himself (herself) in arguments with playmates

38. Which one of you -- you or your husband -- generally takes care of disciplining (CHILD)?

Foster mother; foster father; both

38a. How satisfactory do you feel this is?

38b. Could you tell me some of the methods that are used most often?

38c. Do you both use the same methods of discipline or do you use somewhat different ones?

38d. Could you tell me some of the methods that are used most often?

39. (IF CHILD HAS BEEN IN THIS HOME MORE THAN 3 MONTHS)
How would you feel now about starting all over again with a child just like (CHILD) was when he (she) first came to live with you?

40. We're interested in how people feel about your being a foster parent. We would like to know whether any of the people on this list (SHOW CARD 3) have actively encouraged you in what you are doing, or are they somewhat opposed to your being a foster parent?

Have actively encouraged; have approved; neutral; opposed; don't know; does not apply

A. Your husband
B. Your children
C. Your parents
D. Your sister(s)
E. Your brother(s)
F. Your closest friends
G. Your neighbors
H. Your church friends
I. Your uncles and aunts
J. Your cousins
K. Your doctor
L. Other foster parents
M. Other:_______(SPECIFY)

41. Most women find it helps to talk over some of the things that are bothering them with someone else. Will you please look at the list again (CARD 3) and tell me which of these persons you have talked with about your own troubles or any problems concerning (CHILD)?

Have talked: about own troubles; about child; about both; have come to me (same list as in Q.40 above)

42. And, which of the persons on this list (CARD 3) have come to you to talk over things that were bothering them?

43. (IF RURAL FAMILY)
How far away are your nearest neighbors?

44. How well do you feel you know them?

45. (IF URBAN FAMILY)
We're interested in knowing how you feel about your neighbors. How well do you feel you know them?

46. Does (CHILD) ever go to other people's homes to play?

46a. Does he (she) go to the home of a neighbor, a friend who is not a neighbor, a relative, or to someone else's home?

46b. How often does he (she) go to someone else's home to play?

47. In general, when playing in other homes, does (CHILD) play with boys or girls, or both?

47a. What are the approximate ages or age range of his (her) regular playmates?

48. Do other children ever come to your home to play with (CHILD)?

48a. Are his (her) principal playmates who come here boys or girls or both?

48b. What are the approximate ages or age range of his (her) principal playmates who come here to play?

49. How does (CHILD) get along with his (her) playmates?

50. Have you ever had any complaints or criticisms from others about (CHILD)'s behavior?

    50a. What were these about?

    50b. How did you respond?

51. Do you feel you need to watch (CHILD) when he (she) is playing?

52. Do you feel it is important that you know what (CHILD) is doing at every moment?

53. Why?

Now I have some questions about your own childhood and family situation. Knowing something about the background of present foster parents will be helpful to us in selecting foster parents in the future.

54. First, how many children were there in your family while you were growing up?

55. How many were boys and how many were girls?

56. How did you compare in age -- that is, were you the youngest, oldest, or what?

57. About your father: where did he live as a boy?

    Rural area; small town; city

58. How many brothers and sisters did he have?

59. How much schooling did your father have?

60. What kind of work did he do most of his life?

61. Is your father still living?

    61a. How old were you when he died?

62. Thinking back to when you were growing up, was your father very strict with you?

63. Did your father explain the reason for doing something when you did not want to do it?

64. Did your father use physical punishment in disciplining you?

65. As you remember it, was he very religious, fairly religious, or not at all religious?

66. Would you describe him as a "talkative" man?

67. Was he affectionate toward you?

68. Now we would like some similar information about your mother. Where did she live as a girl? (same alternatives as Q.57.)

69. How many brothers and sisters did she have?

70. How much schooling did your mother have?

71. Is your mother still living?

    71a. How old were you when she died?

72. Thinking back to when you were growing up, was your mother very strict with you?

73. Did your mother explain the reason for doing something when you did not want to do it?

74. Did she use physical punishment in disciplining you?

75. How about your mother--would you describe her as being very religious, fairly religious, or not at all religious?

76. Was she a "talkative" person?

77. Was she affectionate toward you?

78. In what size community did you spend most of your childhood? (SHOW CARD 4)

Rural; under 1,000; 1,000-9,999; 10,000-24,999; 25,000-199,999; over 200,000

79. How would you describe the general economic circumstances of your family throughout most of your childhood? (SHOW CARD 5)

Very wealthy; wealthy; comfortable; meager; poor; other:____________ (EXPLAIN)

80. How satisfied would you say your father was with his work while you were growing up?

81. What about your mother: how satisfied would you say she was with her role and situation while you were growing up?

82. Looking back on our childhood, most of us have pretty definite impressions regarding family relationships. How would you describe your parents' marriage? (SHOW CARD 6)

Very happy; happy; average; unhappy; very unhappy; Other:________________ (SPECIFY)

83. When you were growing up, did you feel closer to one parent than to the other?

83a. Which one?

83b. Why do you think this was so?

84. How would you say you got along with your brothers and sisters at home while you were growing up?

85. Did you feel closer to a certain one or ones?

85a. Which one(s) did you feel closest to?

Finally, I'd like to ask you some questions about your own children.

86. How many of your own do you have?

Now I have some questions about each of your children. Let's start with the oldest and work down to the youngest. What is the first name of the oldest?

87. CHILDREN
88. SEX
89. How old is he (she)
90. Is he (she) living with you?
91. Does he (she) have his (her) own home, is he (she) in school, or what?
92. What is he (she) doing now?
93. Do (FOSTER CHILD) and (OWN CHILD) have much to do with each other?
94. What kinds of things do they do together?
95. (IF NO TO Q.93) Why is that?

96. Did (Do) you find that there were (are) differences in the way you got (get) along with each of your children?

96a. In what ways?

97. In thinking about your own child(ren), what about (them; him; her) do you find most satisfying?

98. What are some of the things about them that have caused you some concern?

(IF FM HAS NOT HAD CHILDREN OF HER OWN)

99. Before you became a foster parent, had you had some experience taking care of children or working with children in some way such as in scouting, church work, school teaching, etc.?

99a. Let me list here the sort of experience you had.

99b. (ASK FOR EACH EXPERIENCE IN Q.99a) How many children were involved?

99c. (ASK FOR EACH EXPERIENCE IN Q.99a) For how long did you do this?

100. What about this (these) experience(s) did you find most satisfying?

101. What about this (these) experience(s) did you find least satisfying?

102. What do you feel accounts for your interest in foster children?

103. In what ways do you think having a foster child live with you is different from having your own children?

104. We're nearly finished now, but there is something else of importance that I want to ask you about. Thinking just of this past week, since last (DAY OF WEEK INTERVIEW TAKES PLACE), I'd like you to describe the most difficult behavior on the part of (CHILD) with which you had to cope.

105. What do you think caused (CHILD) to behave this way?

106. How did you handle this behavior?

107. Thinking of this same period, just since last (DAY OF INTERVIEW), I wish you would describe something (CHILD) did that made you feel particularly good.

108. How did you react to this?

This brings me to the end of the interview. There is this questionnaire to fill out, but before that I have a special request. As I mentioned earlier, we're sure that foster mothers can give us a great deal of help in understanding what it is like to care for a foster child day-in and day-out. We have a very special request to make of you and feel that it would be extremely helpful if you would be willing to carry it out. We would like you to fill out a sheet like this a week from today and mail it in to us. As you can see, it is like the questions I just finished asking you -- the most difficult behavior of (CHILD) with which you had to cope, how you handled it, and also something (CHILD) did which made you feel particularly good. And then, every three weeks we will send you another form, along with a stamped envelope, and ask you to fill it out just for the preceding week, and send it in.

We would like to continue this for about six months, and hope that you will be willing to keep on sending them in for that period of time. No one, as far as we know, has ever done this before. We know that we will learn a great deal from you about what it is like to care for a foster child day-in and day-out. (GO OVER FORM WITH FOSTER MOTHER).

(INTRODUCE BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE)

Here is something which is a little different. We would like to know just how (CHILD) behaves at present and have a form here with quite a few descriptions of behavior.

As I read each one to you, I would like you to tell me whether (CHILD) does this almost always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never. (SHOW CARD 7)

(AFTER QUESTIONNAIRE IS COMPLETED)

This is all that I need to ask you.

(TERMINATE INTERVIEW)

Foster Homes Research Project

Department of Public Welfare
Madison, Wisconsin

SOCIAL WORKER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
ROUND II

1. We're finding that there has been quite a turnover of social workers since we did the interviewing on this study last summer, so let me ask you...were you interviewed then regarding (CHILD) and (FOSTER FAMILY)? Yes; No

   1a. How long have you been supervising this placement?

   1b. Did any other worker supervise this placement since last summer before you took over? Yes; No

   1c. For how long?

2. As you know, we are interested in knowing how much contact you have had with this foster family during the past six months (or since you began supervision). The record in the Research Project Office shows that you made (RECORD NUMBER) visits and conducted (RECORD NUMBER) casework interviews. Are these numbers correct or did you make other visits that we don't have recorded?
   Correct number; Made additional visits

   2a. When were these additional visits made?

   2b. Was there a casework interview?

   2c. (IF "YES" TO Q.2b) With whom was the interview taken?

3. Could you tell me whether the foster mother has called you by telephone during the past six months (or since you began supervision)?

   Called; Did not call

   3a. Do you happen to remember or could you estimate how many times she has telephoned you?

   ______Number of times; Don't know

   3b. And, what did Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) talk with you about in these calls?

4. How well do you feel you know this foster mother?

   Very well; Fairly well; Slightly; Hardly at all

5. Same as Q.4 for FOSTER FATHER.

6. Same as Q.4 for FOSTER CHILD.

7. Thinking now of (CHILD)'s situation (last summer or when you took over his (her) supervision) as compared with his (her) situation at present, would you say that the interest shown by any members of (CHILD)'s natural family has changed in any way since then? Yes; No

   7a. Would you please tell me something about the change in their interest?

   7b. (IF NOT CLEAR FROM Q.7a): Have they become more or less interested in him (her)?

   7c. Would you say that (RELATIVE) has become (more interested; less interested) to a very great extent, to a considerable extent, to some extent, or only slightly?

8. Now, has (CHILD)'s interest in any members of his (her) natural family changed in any way since last summer? Yes; No

   8a. In which relative(s) has his (her) interest changed?

   8b. Is he (she) more or less interested in (RELATIVE)?

   8c. Would you also tell me for each whether (CHILD)'s interest has changed to a very great extent, to a considerable extent, to some extent, or only slightly?

   8d. Why do you think (CHILD) is more (less) interested in (RELATIVE)?

9. Does he (she) have a conflict of loyalties between his (her) own family and the foster family? Yes; No

   9a. To what extent does he (she) have a conflict?

   Very great extent; Considerable extent; Some extent; Very little extent

   9b. What do you think is the basis of his (her) conflict?

   9c. To what degree is this conflict interfering with his (her) present adjustment in the foster home?

   Very great degree; Considerable degree; Some degree; Very little degree

10. With regard to the specific challenges presented by this child's situation, and considering the goal set for the placement, what is your overall estimate of the way the foster mother and foster father are fulfilling their task? Would you say the foster mother is doing...

    An excellent job; A good job; An adequate job; Less than an adequate job; A poor job

11. Same as Q.10 for FOSTER FATHER.

12. Could you tell me your reasons for rating the foster mother in this way?

13. Could you tell me your reasons for rating the foster father in this way?

14. (IF FOSTER MOTHER IS RATED LOWER THAN "EXCELLENT" IN Q.10) Now, I'd like you to try to tell me how you think the foster mother would have to change in order for you to rate her as doing an "excellent" job. In what specific ways would she have to be different for you to judge her as doing an "excellent" job with this child?

15. Same as Q.14 for FOSTER FATHER.

16. Have you ever had experience with, or do you happen to know about any other family which you feel would be more successful than the (FOSTER FAMILY) in caring for this kind of child? Yes; No

    16a. Could you describe these other foster parents to me? In what ways do you think they would be more successful than the (PRESENT FOSTER FAMILY)?

17. Now, I'd like you to think for a moment and describe what kind of foster parents you think would be best or ideal for this kind of foster child. What would you say the ideal foster parent for (CHILD) would be like?

18. How difficult a child would you say (CHILD) is to have in a family group?

    Extremely difficult; Very difficult; Somewhat difficult;
    Not very difficult; Not at all difficult

19. Now I'd like to ask you to think about (CHILD) and as specifically as possible describe what you see as his (her) major problems at the present time. Then for each one, I would like you to tell me in detail just how you would like to see him (her) change. What would you say is his (her) first major problem?

20. And, how would you like to see him (her) change?

21. What would you say specifically is his (her) next major problem?

22. And, would you tell me in detail just how you would like to see him (her) change in this area?

(THE SAME PROCEDURE USED FOR THE THIRD AND FOURTH MAJOR PROBLEMS)

The following series of questions (Q.23-24, inc.) asked for each of the four major problems:

23. Thinking of this problem as of now, has (CHILD) shown any change in either direction in this behavior since last summer? Yes; No

    23a. Would you say he (she) has improved or become worse?

    23b. To what extent would you say he (she) has (improved; become worse)?

    Very great extent; Considerable extent; Some extent; Very slightly

    23c. What specific factors do you think have accounted for this change?

    (IF CHANGE IS ATTRIBUTED TO THE FOSTER PARENTS)
    23d. What specifically have the foster parents done that contributed to this change?

24. How often does this problem come up with (CHILD)? Would you say very frequently, fairly often, sometimes, or only once in a while?

25. Could you tell me the circumstances under which (CHILD) behaves in this way? (PROBE IF NEEDED): When does he (she) (PROBLEM)?

26. Why do you think (CHILD) acts (feels) this way?

27. We would like your judgment as to how much the foster parents are bothered by this problem, and also how much they are concerned by it. First, would you say that Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) is bothered by this problem to a:

    Very great extent; Considerable extent; Some extent;
    Very slightly; Notat all

    27a. In what ways would you say she is bothered?

28. And to what extent would you say that Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) is concerned with this problem? Would you say that she is concerned to a:

    (Same alternatives as in Q.27)

    28a. And could you tell me in what ways she is concerned with this problem?

29. Same as Q.27 for FOSTER FATHER.

30. Same as Q.28 for FOSTER FATHER.

31. How do the foster parents usually cope with this problem? For example, who usually handles this problem? Is it the:

    Foster mother; Foster father; Both; Either, depending on the circumstances

    31a. What kinds of circumstances?

32. In what specific ways do they try to handle this problem?

    32a. How sure of herself (himself, themselves) do you think Mrs. (FAMILY NAME)(Mr. or Mr. and Mrs.) is (are) in handling this problem? Would you say that she (he; they) is (are):

    Extremely sure; Quite sure; Fairly sure; Rather unsure; Very unsure

33. Would you say the foster mother (foster father, foster parents) is (are) handling this problem exceptionally well, quite well, fairly well, or poorly?

34. How would you ideally like to see this problem handled?

QUESTIONS 35 through 70 are the repeated series for the SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH MAJOR PROBLEMS

71. Aside from the specific problems we just discussed, do you think that (CHILD) has improved or become worse in any other ways during the past six months? Yes; No

    71a. Would you describe in detail the ways in which (CHILD) has changed? (PROBE IF NEEDED): Could you tell me just how he has shown this change?

    71b. (IF NOT CLEAR) Would you say that (CHILD) has improved or become worse in this respect?

    71c. (ASK FOR EACH CHANGE) Would you say that (CHILD) has (improved; become worse) to a very great extent, to a considerable extent; to some extent, or to a slight extent?

    71d. (ASK FOR EACH CHANGE) What specific factors do you think led to this child's change?

72. How sure of herself do you think Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) is in relating to her children? Would you say she is:

    Extremely sure; Quite sure; Fairly sure; Rather unsure; Very unsure

73. Same as Q.72 for FOSTER FATHER.

74. Does Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) appear to you to be the kind of mother who usually knows what to expect from her children, or do you think she is at a loss in knowing what to expect from her children?

    74a. Would you say that Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) (knows what to expect from her children OR is at a loss in knowing what to expect from her children):

Nearly all the time; Often; Some of the time; Just now and then

(IF "AT A LOSS" TO Q.74)
74b. Could you give me some examples of the ways in which Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) is at a loss in knowing what to expect from her children?

75. How often would you say that problems arise which Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) is uncertain how to handle or to respond to her children? Would you say that such problems arise:

Nearly all the time; Often; Some of the time; Just now and then; Never

75a. What sources--if any--does she usually turn to for help or guidance?

(IF SOCIAL WORKER SAYS FOSTER MOTHER DOES NOT TURN TO ANYONE FOR HELP):
75b. Then, how do you think she manages to solve these problems or to respond to her children?

76. Do you think Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) is the kind of parent who follows a more or less set pattern in handling her children, or do you think she has to try out various methods in an effort to find those that work?

Set pattern; Has to try out various methods

76a. Would you say that Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) handles her children this way:

Nearly all the time; Often; Some of the time; Just now and then

77. Same as Q.74 for FOSTER FATHER.

77a. Same as Q.74a for foster father.

77b. Same as Q.74b for foster father.

78. Same as Q.75 for FOSTER FATHER.

78a. Same as Q.75a for foster father.

78b. Same as Q.75b for foster father.

79. Same as Q.76 for FOSTER FATHER.

79a. Same as Q.76a for foster father.

80. Do you think the (FAMILY NAME) have made it clear to (CHILD) what is expected of him (her) most of the time? Yes; No

80a. In what specific areas do you think they have not made it clear to (CHILD) what is expected of him (her)?

81. Now we would like to know who usually enforces these expectations. Would you say it is the foster mother who usually enforces these expectations, the foster father, or do both enforce them to the same extent?

82. How firm is (are) he (she, they) in enforcing these expectations? Would you say: very firm, moderately firm, somewhat lenient, or very lenient?

83. To what extent does the foster mother tolerate deviations from her expectations? Would you say she is very tolerant of deviations from these expectations, moderately tolerant, moderately intolerant, or very intolerant?

84. Same as Q.83 for FOSTER FATHER.

85. How would you rate the overall warmth and affection this child is receiving in this foster home from each parent? First, let's take the foster mother...how warm and affectionate do you feel she is toward this child? Would you say she is:

    Very warm; Warm; Fairly warm; Not warm

86. Same as Q.85 for FOSTER FATHER.

87. Do you think this home is one which can provide a good experience for emotionally disturbed children? Yes; Depends; No

    87a. What specific factors make this a good home for emotionally disturbed children?

    87b. Could you tell me why you think this home is unable to provide a good experience for emotionally disturbed children?

    87c. On what does it depend?

88. To what extent do you feel that this foster mother is aware that different children have different personality or emotional needs?

    Would you say she is very much aware, moderately aware, moderately unaware, or very much unaware?

89. Are there any other children, either foster or own, in this home at the present time? Yes; No

    89a. More specifically, how aware do you feel she is that the children in her own home have different needs? Would you say she is very much aware, moderately aware, moderately unaware, or very much unaware?

    89b. Now could you give me some examples of the needs the foster mother sees as being different?

(IF FOSTER CHILD IS NOT MENTIONED IN Q.89b)

90. What about (CHILD), to what extent would you say the foster mother takes his (her) specific needs into account in handing him (her)?

    Very much; Quite a bit; Some extent; Not very much; Not at all

    90a. Now could you give me some examples of the needs of the foster child which Mrs. (FAMILY NAME) sees as being different?

91. Same as Q.89a for FOSTER FATHER

    91a. Same as Q.89b for foster father.

92. Same as Q.90 for FOSTER FATHER.

    92a. Same as Q.90a for foster father.

93. We're also interested in (CHILD)'s school adjustment. What is your impression of his (her) school adjustment at the present time? First, how would you rate his (her) academic performance? Would you say he (she) is doing...

Very well; Well; Satisfactorily; Fair; Poorly; Extremely poorly

94. And, how well would you say he (she) is getting along with his (her) playmates? Would you say he (she) is getting along with them very well, well, satisfactorily, fair, poorly, or extremely poorly?

95. Thinking of (CHILD)'s academic performance at the end of the school year last May or June, and comparing it with his (her) present performance, would you say he (she) is doing...

Much better now; Somewhat better now; Same; Somewhat more poorly now; Much more poorly now

96. And thinking of the way (CHILD) gets along with his (her) schoolmates now, and comparing it with the way he (she) was getting along at the end of the school year last May or June, would you say he (she) is getting along...

Same alternatives as for Q.95.

(IF FOSTER CHILD IS RATED HIGHER OR LOWER ON EITHER FACTOR IN Q.95 OR Q.96 AT PRESENT THAN IN PAST YEAR)

97. What specific factors do you think account for the change in (CHILD)'s academic performance and (or) the way he gets along with his (her) schoolmates?

98. Although it may be a little difficult for you to tell now, as well as you can see into the future, what would you say are the chances that (CHILD) will grow up to be a mature and happy person in later life? Would you say his (her) chances are very good, good, fair or poor?

99. Now thinking back to last summer, do you think (CHILD)'s chances for growing up to be a mature and happy person in later life have improved, stayed about the same, or have they lessened?

99a. Could you tell me why you think that his (her) chances for growing up to be a mature and happy person in later life have (improved; lessened)?

100. Now, considering the size of this family, how "well-off" would you say this family is in terms of their level of income? (SHOW CARD 1)

A. Below subsistence level for this family; they are frequently in debt OR are usually not able to satisfy their subsistence needs.

B. Subsistence level income for this family; they just manage to break even, but sometimes are in debt OR in want of certain necessities.

C. Sufficient income to satisfy all of family's subsistence needs, but there is no surplus income.

D. Average income level; there is some income available above and beyond family's subsistence needs, but could afford only an occasional luxury.

E. Above average; income level is well above family's subsistence needs; could easily afford various luxuries.

F. Don't know.

101. Does this family rent their home (or farm), own their home, or what?

Rent; Own; Other:______________________

102. What is the general physical condition of the outside of this family's house?

Excellent; Good; Fair; Poor

103. What is the general physical condition of the inside of this family's house?

Excellent; Good; Fair; Poor

104. In what size community is this foster home located? (SHOW CARD 2)

Suburban; Large city; Small town - industrial; Small town - farming; Rural

(TERMINATE INTERVIEW)

Foster Homes Research Project

Department of Public Welfare
Madison, Wisconsin

FOSTER MOTHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
ROUND II

1. On this second interview we are asking for additional information about your experiences as a foster parent. First, thinking back a bit...before you became a foster parent for the first time, how many -- if any -- other families did you know who were caring for foster children?

   1a. Did the fact that you knew these foster parents before you yourself became a foster parent in any way influence your decision to care for a foster child? (Could you tell me about this?) No influence, or______________________

2. Since you became a foster parent, have you known other foster families?

   2a. Are these people relatives, friends, neighbors, or what?

   2b. Have you visited with, or talked over the telephone with, any of these other foster mothers?

   2c. How well do you feel you know (knew) each of these foster mothers? Would you say very well, moderately well, or slightly?

   2d. How helpful do you feel it was to talk with each of them?

   2e. In what ways was this helpful?

3. What about a class or discussion group of foster parents...how many times--if ever--have you attended such a class or discussion group?

   3a. What kind of group was it that you attended?

   3b. To what extent--if any--did you find these meetings helpful? Would you say they were very, moderately, not very, or not at all helpful?

      3c. In what ways were they helpful?

4. As you know, there is always a need for good foster parents. In your opinion, what steps might be taken to encourage qualified couples to become foster parents?

5. Now I'd like to ask you about any specific problems you have at the present time with (FOSTER CHILD). What are the main problems or difficult kinds of behavior with which you have to cope?
(LIST OF FOUR MAJOR PROBLEMS)

6. Of these problems or difficult kinds of behavior you've mentioned, which one would you say is the most serious? _______(#), or All same

   6a. Even though this is relatively the most serious problem... in itself, do you consider it as very, somewhat, or not very serious?

   6b. Would you say that all of these problems are very serious, somewhat serious, or not very serious? (asked if "all same" for Q.6)

   6c. Why do you feel that this problem is the most serious of those you mentioned?

   6d. Of the problems you've mentioned, which one is the least serious?

   6e. Why do you feel this is the least serious problem?

THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS (7-15, inc.) ASKED FOR EACH OF THE FOUR MAJOR PROBLEMS LISTED IN Q.5

7. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about the first problem you mentioned...the (REPEAT FIRST PROBLEM). Do you usually know when (CHILD) is going to behave this way, or are you unable to tell when this will happen?

8. What explanation do you have for (his, her) behaving in this way? (What happens that causes the child to do this?)

9. When the child does this, to what degree is this behavior a problem for you...that is, are you bothered by it a great deal, somewhat, not very, or not at all?

9a. In what ways is this behavior a problem for you...that is, why are you bothered when (he, she) does this?

10. What other persons, if any, are bothered by this behavior?

10a. Is (PERSON) bothered by this behavior a great deal, somewhat, or not much?

11. When (CHILD) does this, who handles the problem most frequently... you or your husband?

respondent; husband; both; neither: just ignore it

11a. How do you (does he) usually handle this problem?

11b. Do you (Does he) almost always handle the problem the same way, or are other methods also used? (What other methods are used?)

12. Would you say you (and your husband) are dealing with this problem very effectively, somewhat effectively, somewhat ineffectively, or very ineffectively?

13. Why do you feel this way?

14. Comparing this child as (he, she) was last summer with the way (he, she) is now with respect to this (REPEAT PROBLEM), is this behavior more of a problem now than it was last summer, about the same, or less of a problem now than last summer?

15. How much of a change in this behavior has there been since last summer... would you say that there has been a very great change, a considerable amount, some, or relatively little?

16. In addition to the things we've discussed, in what other ways--if any-- has (CHILD)'s behavior changed since last summer?

16a. (IF NOT CLEAR) Would you consider this change an improvement or not?

16b. To what extent has (he, she) changed in this regard...would you say a great deal, somewhat, or not much?

17. We're interested in how you feel about (CHILD)'s school performance and adjustment. First, how would you rate (his, her) academic performance... Is (he, she) doing very well, satisfactorily, fair, or poorly in school work?

18. Comparing (CHILD)'s academic performance in school now with how well (he, she) was doing at the end of the school year last May or June, would you say (he, she) is doing much better now, somewhat better, the same, somewhat worse, or much worse now?

    18a. What do you feel are the reasons (CHILD) is doing (better, worse) now?

19. How well do you feel (CHILD) is getting along with (his, her) schoolmates--would you say very well, moderately well, fair, or poorly?

20. Comparing the way (CHILD) gets along with his (her) schoolmates now with the way he (she) was getting along with them at the end of the school year last May or June, would you say (he, she) is getting along much better now, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse?

    20a. Why do you think (he, she) gets along (better, worse) now than (he, she) did at the end of the last school year?

21. All in all, how well do you feel you understand (CHILD)...why (he, she) behaves the way (he, she) does, or what make (him, her) tick, so to speak...would you say very well, moderately well, about average, rather poorly, or very poorly?

    21a. Could you tell me some of the things you feel you don't understand very well?

22. Thinking back over the time you have had (CHILD) with you, are there some things you feel you understand better about children now than you did before (he, she) came?

    22a. Can you tell me some of the things about children which you understand better now?

    22b. Why do you feel this way? (If "no" to Q.22)

23. Have you found that you have had to handle (CHILD) differently from (your) other children?

    23a. Could you tell me in what ways and why (CHILD) has to be handled differently from others?

    23b. Why would you say so? (If "no" to Q.23)

24. Now I'd like you to think back to the time when you were growing up in your own parents' home. Who made most of the important decisions in your family...was it your father, did your father and mother make these decisions together, or did your mother usually do this?

    24a. On what did it depend? (If "depends" to Q.24)

25. Did your parents usually agree on how to spend the family income, or did they disagree?

    25a. Who usually gave in?

    25b. On what did it depend?

26. Which one of your parents was generally more concerned that you did well in school?

    Father, both, mother, depends

27. Which one of your parents was more apt to let you have your own way about doing things?

    Father; both; mother; depends; neither

28. Which one of your parents did you turn to most often when something worried you?

29. Which one of your parents was more likely to tell you what was expected of you?

30. Which one of your parents usually punished you for not doing something that was expected of you?

31. Did your father and mother usually agree on how to discipline and punish you, or did they usually disagree?

    31a. Who usually gave in, your father or your mother?

32. For what kinds of things were you usually punished?

33. How were you usually punished? That is, what methods were most often used?

34. Now what about in your present family here...does your husband usually make most of the important family decisions, is it done together, or do you usually do this?

    34a. On what does it depend?

35. Do you and your husband usually agree on how to spend the family income, or do you disagree?

    35a. Who usually gives in?

    35b. On what does it depend?

36. Is your husband or are you generally more concerned that your children do well in school?

37. Which one of you is more apt to let the children have their own way about doing things?

38. Which one of you do your children turn to most often when something worries them?

39. Which one of you is more likely to tell your children what is expected of them?

40. Which one of you usually punishes the children for not doing something that is expected of them?

41. Do you and your husband usually agree on how to discipline and punish the children, or do you disagree?

    41a. Who usually gives in, your husband or you?

42. For what kind of things are your children usually punished?

43. How are your children usually punished? That is, what methods are most often used?

44. When problems come up about how to handle your children, what sources do you rely on most often for help and guidance?

45. How often do you feel uncertain or unsure about how to handle problems that come up in your family...would it be very often, sometimes, only rarely, or never?

    45a. What kinds of problems have you felt uncertain about?

46. I'm going to read some descriptions of different kinds of children. For each one, please tell me how difficult you think it would be for you to handle a foster child of grade school age who behaved this way. First, do you think it would be very difficult, moderately difficult, moderately easy or very easy to handle a child who talks back or yells back at you every time you ask the child to do somethings?

47. Why do you think it would be (ANSWER STATED ABOVE) to handle this?

48. How do you think you would handle this type of behavior?

49. How difficult or easy would it be for you to handle a child who is very quiet, likes to be alone, and doesn't seem to enjoy being around you no matter how nice you are to him or her?

50. Why do you think it would be (ANSWER TO Q.49) to handle this type of child?

51. How do you think you would handle this type of behavior?

52. How difficult or easy would it be for you to handle a child who lies frequently?

53. Why do you think it would be (ANSWER TO Q.52) to handle a child who lies frequently?

54. How do you think you would handle a child who lies frequently?

55. How difficult or easy would it be for you to handle a child who doesn't take care of his or her clothes or the furniture in the foster home?

56. Why do you think it would be (ANSWER TO Q.55) to handle a child of this type?

57. How do you think you would handle a child of this type?

58. How difficult or easy would it be for you to handle a child who does very poor work in school and can't seem to learn easily?

59. Why do you think it would be (ANSWER TO Q.58) to handle this type of child?

60. How would you handle this type of child?

61. And, how difficult or easy would it be for you to handle a child who is stubborn and doesn't like to do what he or she is told?

62. Why do you think it would be (ANSWER TO Q.61) to handle this type of child?

63. How would you handle a child of this type?

64. These types of children we've just discussed are listed on this card (SHOW CARD 1). If you had to choose among children behaving in these ways, which one do you think would be easiest for you to get along with?

A. A child who talks back or yells back at you every time you ask the child to do something.

B. A child who is very quiet, likes to be alone, and doesn't seem to enjoy being around you no matter how nice you are to him or her.

C. A child who lies frequently.

D. A child who doesn't take care of his or her clothes or the furniture in the foster home.

E. A child who does poor work in school and can't seem to learn easily.

F. A child who is stubborn and doesn't like to do what he or she is told.

65. Why do you think a child like this would be easiest to get along with?

66. And, which one of the types of child on this card would be hardest for you to get along with?

67. Why do you think a child like this would be hardest to get along with?

(TERMINATE INTERVIEW)

Interviewer Evaluation of the Attitude of the Foster Mother

1. How would you rate this foster mother's attitude toward this interview when you began? Would you say that she was:

   Extremely cooperative; quite cooperative; somewhat cooperative; went along: neither cooperative or resistant; somewhat resistant; quite resistant; extremely resistant

2. And, how would you rate her attitude toward the interview when you finished? Would you say she was:

   (same alternatives as for Q.1)

3. Now, how would you rate her general interest in this study? Would you say that she is:

   Extremely interested; very interested; somewhat interested; just a little interested; not interested

4. How willing do you think this foster mother would be to be interviewed one more time? Do you think she would be:

   Extremely willing; quite willing; somewhat willing; a little willing; not willing

APPENDIX H

Results of Factor Analysis of Potential Predictors to Success

Variable Number	Item	Loadings
	Factor I	
5	FF concern for own children	.20
22	FM total score on Attitude Questionnaire	.26
26	FM response to story re: broken toy	-.26
39	Number of areas FP autocratic	.31
40*	FM: difficult to handle defiant child	.64
42	FM: difficult to handle stubborn child	.28
47*	FM: good risk with defiant child	-.76
48	FM: good risk with withdrawn child	-.24
51*[a]	FM: confidence with defiant child	.76
	Factor II	
8	FF natal family: economic level	-.30
41*	FM: difficult to handle withdrawn child	-.73
43	FM: confidence with stubborn child	-.27
48	FM: good risk with withdrawn child	.21
52*	FM: confidence with withdrawn child	-.69
	Factor III	
1	Number of own children	-.23
7	FF occupation	-.29
17	FM natal: parents gave reasons	-.30
30	Place of residence	.37
31*	FM: number sources support from larger family	-.63
32*	FM: close friends support	-.48
33*	FF: close friends support	-.63
34	FM: relationship with others	.27
35	FM: active encouragement from FF	-.26
38*	FF: number sources support from larger family	-.52
39	Number of areas FP are autocratic	.20
48	FM: good risk with withdrawn child	-.22
52	FM: confidence with withdrawn child	.21
	Factor IV	
2	FM satisfied with own children	.23
11	FM education	-.27
32	FM: close friends support	-.31
34*	FM: reciprocal relationship with others	.50
37*	FM discusses problems with FF	.41
48*	FM: sensitivity to withdrawn child	.76

*In factor sum

[a] The item referring to "confidence" in handling a particular hypothetical problem might better be phrased "lack of confidence" in order to make clear the meaning of the sign in the correlation. When items were summed in a factor, scales were reversed as needed so that the correlations of each of these items with the factor would all have the same sign.

Variable Number	Item	Loadings
	Factor V	
4	FF satisfied with own children	.24
6	FF natal family: autocratic	-.23
13*	FM natal family: economic level	.66
14	FM close to satisfied mother	.40
15*	FM natal family: parents satisfied	.74
19	FM natal family: parents affectionate	.24
21	FM natal family: parents autocratic	.25
30	Place of residence	.25
	Factor VI	
5	FF concern for own children	.32
28	FM response to story re: washing dishes	.21
42*	FM: difficult to handle stubborn child	-.51
43*	FM: confidence with stubborn child	-.56
46*	FM: good risk with stubborn child	.76
	Factor VII	
6*	FF natal: parents autocratic	.75
14	FM close to satisfied mother	.25
34	FM: relationship with others	-.22
35	FM: active encouragement from FF	.21
49*	FM: good risk with careless child	-.43
55*	FF: parents strict	.67
	Factor VIII	
5	FF concern for own children	-.24
17	FM natal: parents gave reasons	-.28
21*	FM natal: parents autocratic	-.67
24	FF Attitude Questionnaire: lack of helplessness	-.21
26	FM response re: broken toy	.35
34	FM: relationship with others	-.20
	Factor IX	
1	Number of own children	.29
13	FM natal: economic level	.21
17	FM natal: parents gave reasons	-.23
41	FM: difficult to handle withdrawn child	-.38
44	FM: good risk with defiant child	-.25
45*	FM: good risk with withdrawn child	-.83
55	FF natal: parents strict	-.20
	Factor X	
2	FM satisfied with own children	.27
7*[a]	FF occupation	.55
18	FM natal: parents religious	-.36
24	FF Attitude Questionnaire: lack of helplessness	-.33
25[a]	FF Attitude Questionnaire: selective firmness	.67
30*[a]	Place of residence	-.52
35	FF supports FM	.24

*In factor sum

[a] These three items were also summed for Factor Xa. However, the results reported in the text refer only to Factor Xb, which consists of items 7 and 30.

Variable Number	Item	Loadings
	Factor XI	
5	FF concern for own children	-.25
6	FF natal: parents autocratic	.20
8*	FF natal: economic level	.51
35	FM: active support from FF	.24
37	FM discusses problems with FF	.25
38	FF: support from larger family	.24
53*	FF natal: father gave reasons	.67
57*	FF natal: parents affectionate	.77
	Factor XII	
4*	FF satisfied with own children	.49
7	FF occupation	.25
14	FM close to satisfied mother	-.24
16*	FM natal: parents strict	.62
17	FM natal: parents gave reasons	.30
19*	FM natal: parents affectionate	.56
37	FM discusses problems with FF	-.26
44	FM: good risk with defiant child	.33
54	FF natal: parents satisfied	.26
	Factor XIII	
3*	FM concern for own children	-.66
5	FF concern for own children	-.22
9	FM age	-.26
22	FM total score to Attitude Questionnaire	-.26
35	FF supports FM	-.23
37	FM discusses problems with FF	-.25
39	FP autocratic	.26
40	FM: difficult to handle defiant child	-.26
42	FM: difficult to handle stubborn child	-.22
49	FM: good risk with careless child	-.32
	Factor XIV	
1	Number of own children	.22
17	FM natal: parents gave reasons	.21
19	FM natal: parents affectionate	.26
30	Place of residence	.27
31	FM: number of supports from larger family	.26
35	FF supports FM	.26
36*	FM supports FF	.75
37	FM discusses problems with FF	.34
39	FP autocratic	-.24
	Factor XV	
4	FF satisfied with own children	-.45
8	FF natal: economic level	-.22
9	FM age	.26
20*	FM natal: number of children	.68
44	FM: good risk with defiant child	.28

*In factor sum

Variable Number	Item	Loadings
	Factor XVI	
22*	FM total score on Attitude Questionnaire	-.62
23*	FF Attitude Questionnaire: warmth	-.50
26	FM response re: broken toy	.23
27	FM response re: taking money	.39
28	FM response re: washing dishes	.36
29*	FM response re: child crying	.69
39	FP autocratic	-.32
44	FM: good risk with defiant	.24
46	FM: good risk with stubborn	.24
	Factor XVII	
9*	FM age	.63
10*	FF education	-.53
11*	FM education	-.65
12	Level of living	.22
17	FM natal: parents gave reason	-.28
30	Place of residence	.23
35	FF supports FM	.25
37	FM discusses problems with FF	.21
	Factor XVIII	
14	FM close to satisfied mother	.23
17	FM natal: parents gave reasons	-.25
22	FM total score on Attitude Questionnaire	.29
23*	FF Attitude Questionnaire: warmth	.47
24	FF Attitude Questionnaire: lack of helplessness	.34
32	FM: support from close friends	-.34
35	FF supports FM	-.26
37	FM discusses problems with FF	-.20
38	FF: number sources of support from larger family	.27
42	FM: difficult to handle stubborn child	.22
49	FM: good risk with careless	-.28
50*	FM: good risk with slow child	-.70
	Factor XIX	
1	Number of own children	.26
2	FM satisfied with own children	-.25
10*	FF education	.48
29	FM response to story re: child crying	-.25
39	FP autocratic	.24
42	FM: difficult to handle defiant child	.33
54	FF natal: parents satisfied	.29
58	FF natal: number of children	-.57
	Factor XX	
12	Level of living	.25
54*	FF natal: parents satisfied	-.53
56*	FF natal: parents religious	-.69

*In factor sum

APPENDIX I

Stories Presented to Foster Mothers and Foster Children for Completion

The following stories are phrased in the way in which they were presented to the foster mothers in the Round III collection of data. When used with foster children, the stories were first presented in terms of "a boy" or "a girl" (the same sex as that of the child being interviewed) for Part A, and then for Part B the pronoun "you" was used in each story and the child was asked to imagine himself in the situation described.

1. One day a child volunteers to clean up the back yard for his family. He starts to do the job but leaves it only half finished and goes out to play with his friends.

2. One day in school a child has an argument with his teacher and talks back to her. His teacher gives him a note to take home to his parents describing what he has done.

3. One day a child is very angry with his brother. He deliberately breaks one of his brother's toys. That night his brother tells his parents what the child has done.

4. After school one day a child plays in the school yard with some of his friends. On his way home he realizes that he left his new gloves in the schoolyard. He runs back to see if he can find them, but they are not there.

5. A child wants to go to the movies with his friends, but he has already spent all of his allowance money. He takes some money from his mother's purse to pay for the movies. That night at dinner the child tells his parents what he has done and says that he is sorry.

6. A child was trying hard to help his parents clean up the house. While he was trying to move a table, he accidentally broke an expensive lamp.

7. When a child's parents go to the movies one night, they ask him to babysit for his little brother. Instead of staying with his brother, the child goes over to play at a friend's house and isn't home when his parents return.

8. A child's parents told him how dangerous it was for him to go swimming in the lake. One day when all of his friends decided to go swimming in the lake, the child went with them. He didn't tell his parents.

9. Even though a child knew he had to help with the dishes every night, one night he said he wouldn't do them.

10. A child knows that he is supposed to come home straight from school. One day he doesn't come home until after dinner. When his parents ask him where he has been, he refuses to tell them.

11. One day a child went to his room and started to cry. When his parents asked him why he was crying, he said it was none of their business.

APPENDIX J

Differences between "Successful" Parents Caring for Different Kinds of Disturbed Children

A hypothesis developed early in the planning of this study was that foster parents vary in the degree of skill with which they can handle certain kinds of behavior problems. Although such thinking undoubtedly enters into the current practice of caseworkers in the field, it seemed important to try to collect data relevant to this point of view. For this reason care was taken in the initial selection of children to identify groups showing distinct "syndromes" of behavior. The series of questions asked the foster mother during the Round II interview (Questions 46-67), regarding six hypothetical behavior problems, was also developed because of this particular interest, in order to determine whether any systematic differences could be found in the responses to these problems given by mothers known to be coping with the same kind of behavior problem in their foster child.

Evidence of Differentiation among Foster Mothers in Their Responses to the Hypothetical Questions

As mentioned earlier in Chapter VIII, the foster mothers on the whole reacted differentially to the six hypothetical behavior problems presented (describing a defiant child, a withdrawn child, one who lies, one who is careless about clothes and furniture, one who has difficulty learning in school, and a stubborn child). When asked whether it would be "very difficult, moderately difficult, moderately easy, or very easy" to handle each of the behaviors described, only 3 percent of all the mothers felt that all six problems would be easy to handle (not one felt all six would be "very easy" to handle). And only 20 percent felt that all six would be difficult to handle, with 2 percent saying all six would be "very difficult." The remainder, two-thirds of the foster mothers, showed combined reactions of "difficult" and "easy" to the problems.

After the series of questions was completed, the mothers were asked to indicate which one of the six kinds of problems they felt would be easiest to handle, and which one hardest to handle. Their responses again indicate considerable differences in the ways in which they regard these problems, as their choices of both the "easiest" and the "hardest" are well distributed among four different problems (see Table 15). It is also of particular interest to find that nearly one-fifth of the foster mothers select the "withdrawn" child as the hardest to get along with, while another one-fifth select this same kind of child as easiest to get along with. To a lesser extent, these differences also are found in the reactions to a "defiant" child.

Examples of some of the foster mothers' reactions to the description of a "defiant" child follow:

> "Well, I have no patience with kids when they sass. I don't like it at all."

> "It depends on the child. M---- would be sassy if I'd let her. She'd talk back, but she knows she'd get punished. I have handled a lot of them, and this has worked. She has to work off steam too."
>
> "Let's say - I just wouldn't know how to cope with a child who answers back. Our own little girl does it, but I keep telling myself she'll get over it. The other children aren't mouthy, though. I just don't know how I'd handle this if they did."

Other kinds of reactions were expressed toward a "withdrawn" child:

> "It is something that would get on your nerves. I don't like sulky people. I get mad at a sulker. I can't stand anyone that sulks. What would you do? Go about your business if they don't want to be by you or near you. What can you do?"
>
> "Don't know. It would be pretty hard to get to him. He wouldn't tell you what was wrong with him. You'd have to do all his work for him--thinking, doing, guessing what he wanted. I'd earn his confidence--work at him real slow--wouldn't force him. Let him take his time."
>
> "We've got one like that. I don't like it because you can't visit with her. She's no company for me."
>
> "I had one like that; you never knew if what you were saying was going to make an impression on him or if he just lived in his own little dream world. I would find a soft spot. With K. it was a little barn full of animals from the dime store; when I bought that for him I was his pal from then on. With D. it was a little game we played when we all went to the barn."

The answers to the two open questions regarding each hypothetical problem were rated in terms of whether the foster mother would be considered a "good risk" in handling such a problem and also in terms of the "degree of confidence" which she indicated in describing how she might handle it. When the responses given by the total group of foster mothers are intercorrelated and examined, we find the following:

1) Responses to the question as to whether it would be "difficult or easy" to handle each kind of problem are intercorrelated significantly with each other. Mothers who say it would be "easy" to handle a defiant child are also significantly more likely than others to say it would be "easy" to handle a "child who lies", a "careless child", or a "stubborn" child--all problems which in a sense involve a power conflict between parent and child. The mothers' reactions to handling a "withdrawn" or a "slow" child, however, are unrelated to any of the others; these two problems are apparently regarded very differently.

2) The ratings of the mothers' "degree of confidence" in handling each of these problems are intercorrelated in the same way as their responses to the question of "difficult or easy", but to a lesser extent.

Table 15

Foster Mothers' Selection of "Easiest" and "Hardest" Problems among the Six Hypothetical Problems

A child who:	Proportion of foster mothers selecting each problem as: Easiest to get along with	Hardest to get along with
Talks back or yells back at you every time you ask him to do something	13%	31%
Is very quiet, likes to be alone, and doesn't seem to enjoy being around you no matter how nice you are to him or her	23	18
Lies frequently	1	24
Doesn't take care of his or her clothes or the furniture in the foster home	25	1
Does poor work in school and can't seem to learn easily	30	2
Is stubborn and doesn't like to do what he or she is told	4	21
No clear choice made by foster mother	4	3
	100%	100%
Number of mothers	102	102

3) The rating of the mother's "degree of confidence" apparently involves a somewhat different dimension than her response to the question of whether it would be "difficult" or "easy" to handle each problem, although they correlate significantly with each other for every problem except in regard to "the child who lies," and most highly in regard to a "slow child" (r = .66) and a "careless child" (r = .59).

4) The ratings of the mothers as a "good" or "poor" risk in handling each problem are unrelated to each other with one exception; there is a low but significant correlation (r = .23) between the mother's being rated a "good risk" in handling a "defiant" child and in handling a "withdrawn" child.

5) The rating of the mother as a "good risk" in handling a "defiant" child is not related to her response that it would be "easy" to handle such a child, but "good risk" and "easy" to handle are significantly correlated in regard to a "careless," a "slow," and a "stubborn" child, all of which may be regarded as less serious problem behavior than the other three. In regard to a "withdrawn" child, the relationship is in the opposite direction: "good risk" is significantly related (r = .47) with the response that it would be "difficult" to handle such a problem.

However, these differential reactions to the ease or difficulty of hnadling the six hypothetical behavior problems do not throw any light on the "success" ratings for the total group. Neither do the ratings of the foster mother as a "good" or "poor" risk in handling these behaviors nor of the "confidence" revealed in her discussion of them correlate significantly with her "success" rating except for three: the rating of the foster mother as a "good risk" in handling a defiant child, as a "good risk" and as confident in handling a withdrawn child. These three ratings, particularly the first, appear to have some general significance in identifying foster mothers who are doing a good job in general. Our failure to find more numerous significant relationships with "success" appears consistent with the hypothesis stated earlier, for included in the total group are mothers caring for children with a very wide variety of problem behaviors. If somewhat different skills or attitudes are needed for the effective handling of different kinds of problems, we would not necessarily expect any indications of these particular skills or attitudes to be correlated with "success" in the group as a whole.

Characteristics of Foster Families Caring for Children Showing Certain Kinds of Problem Behavior

If information obtained from the foster mother is to have special significance regarding her ability to care for a child with a particular kind of problem, this can only be determined by an analysis of the responses given by mothers known to be handling certain behavior problems. This accounted for our attempt in the initial selection of the sample to identify groups of children with definite "syndromes" of behavior on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule, and as a result care was taken to keep two groups quite distinct from each other--those with high scores on the "defiant" factor cluster, and those with high scores on the "tense-anxious" factor cluster (see page 8 in Chapter II). Unfortunately, the numbers of children in these two groups are so small that any findings must be regarded as extremely tentative; by the time of Round II there were 22 children in the "defiant" cluster and 18 in the "tense-anxious" cluster, but in the analysis to be reported here these numbers dropped to 19 and 17 because of eliminating two foster homes in which there was no foster father and two children with a sibling of the same behavior classification living in the same foster home. The third "syndrome" group, consisting of children with high scores in the "slow" factor cluster, is not reported on here because of the still smaller number in it and the fact that both of the other groups include a number of children who could also be described as "slow".

Two of the descriptions of the hypothetical problems were phrased with the intention of describing the particular problems of the children in these two "syndrome" groups. It appears that the one describing the "defiant" child is reasonably adequate in describing at least one kind of "defiant" behavior represented by the factor cluster named "defiance." However, the second hypothetical problem describes a "withdrawn" or "unresponsive" child, a characteristic represented in the "tense-anxious" cluster but not the most predominant one, as we first believed. The score in this cluster is defined by the scores in the factors of tension and anxiety, lack of affection or unresponsiveness, and infantilism. Consequently we cannot assume that the hypothetical description of a "withdrawn" child applies equally to all the children in this "syndrome" group.

Examining only the answers given by the mothers actually caring for a child described at the time of selection as "defiant," then, we find that the way in which she responds to the hypothetical question about handling a "defiant" child, when rated in terms of whether she would be a "good" or a "poor" risk, shows significant positive correlations with her "success" rating and with a number of other evaluations made by the social worker (see Table 16). On the other hand, the "degree of confidence" which she reveals in her answers does not appear to be related to her "success." Neither are the ratings "good risk" or "confidence" of her responses to the questions about handling a "withdrawn" child, with one exception. On the basis of this limited evidence, then, it appears that information obtained from the foster mother regarding her handling of defiance does provide a means of differentiation among mothers and may be of considerable value in identifying those with particular skills.

When a similar examination is made of the answers given by foster mothers known to be actually caring for children described as "tense and anxious," the pattern is not quite so clear, but on the whole suggests that the rating of the mother's "degree of confidence" in handling a "withdrawn" child is a significant indicator of some of the parental skills included in the "success" rating (skill in handling problems, warmth, and ability to take the child's needs into account.) The dimensions included in the rating of the mother as a "good risk" in handling a "withdrawn" child are not so consistently related to "success."

Taken together, the ratings of answers given by the foster mothers known to be caring for children in these two different "syndrome" groups suggests that the mothers do provide evidence of their special skills in handling these problems. Whether this or a similar kind of questioning has validity when used as part of an intake study requires further study.

At this point we recommend that the story completion technique be used as the medium for collecting information regarding the foster mother's attitudes and ideas of handling hypothetical behavior problems. If this technique is elaborated and refined, as suggested in Chapter X, it holds out considerable promise for the study of particular parental skills and attitudes.

Table 16

Correlations Describing Two Groups of Foster Mothers, as Evaluated by Social Workers and on the Basis of Their Own Answers to Hypothetical Behavior Problems

	Foster mothers caring for "defiant" children				Foster mothers caring for "tense-anxious" children			
	To hypothetical descriptions of:				To hypothetical descriptions of:			
	Defiant behavior		Withdrawn behavior		Defiant behavior		Withdrawn behavior	
Social worker's ratings:	Good risk	Confidence	Good risk	Confidence	Good risk	Confidence	Good risk	Confidence
Foster mother success II	55	-13	16	-04	18	29	24	45
Family success II	61	-10	18	-06	06	27	24	41
Foster parents' skill in handling major problems (II)	32	-21	02	-11	31	41	33	53
Foster parents' contribution to child's improvement (II)	-15	-31	-25	17	02	53	65	05
How secure are foster parents (I)	41	03	54	-13	14	-01	65	33
How sure are foster parents in relating to children (II)	54	04	07	-16	-11	-06	06	30
Foster mother's warmth I	38	09	40	-11	19	05	10	68
Foster mother's warmth II	16	15	24	-02	51	40	03	51
Extent to which foster parents adapt standards (I)	45	-07	03	-34	-07	-20	22	12
Extent to which foster parents take child's needs into account (II)	41	02	-12	-40	29	14	41	56

N = 19	N = 17
$r_{05} = .456$	$r_{05} = .482$
$r_{01} = .575$	$r_{01} = .606$

A Comparison of Foster Families Caring for "More Disturbed" Children with Those Caring for the "Less Disturbed"

Another approach to the question of "matching" different skills of foster parents with the particular needs of the foster child is to consider the "degree of disturbance" of the child. As mentioned earlier in Chapter VI, we found a low but significant relationship between the global "success" ratings and the degree of disturbance shown by the child, indicating that the parents caring for the most difficult children were slightly less likely to be given as high ratings as those caring for the least difficult children.

In order to examine the effect of the degree of the child's disturbance further, the sample of children was divided into two groups. The 47 children with total scores on the Child Behavior Characteristics Schedule above the mean score comprise one group and are designated as the "more disturbed," while the 55 children with total scores at or below the mean are designated the "less disturbed."

When the foster homes caring for these two groups of children are considered separately, the relationship between the child's degree of disturbance and the "success" ratings drops to insignificant levels (.06 with Family II "success" for the "more disturbed" and .25 for the "less disturbed").

An examination of the relationships between the family "success" ratings and the various cognate ratings of "success" for these two groups reveals only one statistically significant difference (using z transformations for the comparison): a correlation coefficient of .50 is found for the parents caring for the "less disturbed" children between their "success" rating and the degree of confidence shown in handling the child's major problems, whereas for the parents caring for the "more disturbed" children this correlation is -.03, indicating that the social workers do not perceive the successful parents caring for the "more disturbed" as confident.

A similar comparison of the two groups of parents was made in regard to all of the items examined as predictors to "success" (described in Chapter VIII) in order to see whether certain items might be more useful predictors for parents caring for "more disturbed" children than for those caring for the "less disturbed." Although there are differences between these two groups, none is statistically significant. This strengthens our confidence in the utility of the predictive items for the total group.